Application of Redemption

By the Effectual Work of the Word, and Spirit of Christ, for the bringing home of lost Sinners to God. *The Ninth and Tenth Books.*

Besides many other seasonable, and Soul-searching Truths, there is also largely shewed,

The heart must be humble and contrite before the Lord will dwell in it.

Stubborn, and bloody Sinners may be made broken hearted.

There must be true sight of sin, before the heart can be broken for it.

Application of special sins by the Ministry, is a means to bring men to sight of, and sorrow for them.

Meditation of sin, a special means to break the heart.

The same word is profitable to some, not to others.

The Lord sometimes makes the Word prevail most, when it's most opposed.

Sins unrepented of, makes way for piercing Terrors.

The Truth terrible to a guilty conscience.

Gross and scandalous sinners, God usually exerciseth with heavy breakings of heart, before they be brought to Christ.

11. *Sorrow for sin rightly set on, pierceth the heart of the sinner throughly.*

12. *They whose hearts are pierced by the Word, are carried with love and respect to the Ministers of it: And are busie to enquire, and ready to submit to the mind of God.*

13. *Sinners in distress of conscience, are ignorant what they should do.*

14. *A contrite sinner sees a necessity of coming out of his sinful condition.*

15. *There is a secret hope wherewith the Lord supports the hearts of contrite sinners.*

16. *They who are truly pierced for their sins, do prize and covet deliverance from their sins.*

17 *True contrition is accompanied with confession of sin, when God calls thereunto.*

18. *The Soul that is pierced for sin, is carried with a restless dislike against it.*

---

that Faithful, and known Servant of Christ; Mr. THOMAS HOOKER, late Pastor of the Church at *Hertford* in *New-England*; sometimes Preacher of the Word at *Chelmsford* in *Essex* and Fellow of *Emmanuel* Colledg in *Cambridg*.

Printed from the Authors Papers, Written with his own Hand.
And attested to be such, in an Epistle.

By *Thomas Goodwin*, and *Philip Nye*.

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ever, that plead for the *Prerogative of Gods Grace in mans Converſion.*

And for the *Arminian* Doctrine, how low doth that run in this great Article? this we may without breach of Charity ſay of it; That if they or their followers have no further or deeper work upon their hearts, than what their Doctrine in that point calls for; they would fal ſhort of Heaven: though thoſe other great truths they together therewith teach, God may and doth ſavingly bleſs unto true Converſion, he breaking through thoſe Errors into ſome of their hearts.

And how much our *reformed Writers abroad*, living in continual wranglings and Diſputes with the *Adverſaries of Grace*, have omitted in a *Practical* and *Experimental* way, to lay open and anatomize the *inwards* of this *great work*, for the Comfort and ſettlement, of poor ſouls, many of themſelves do greatly bewayl: And to find them work, and divert them from this, it hath been the

Devils great Policy (who is at the head of all those Controversies) as also ever since *Pelagius* time, to this very day) to make that dry and barren plot of Ground (namely *the naked dispute of the freedom of mans wil*) to be the great seat of this War (as the Pope did the Conquest of the Holy Land, in the darker times, to find al Christian Princes work) and thither to draw al the forces and intentions of mens minds jejunely & in a great part *Phylosophically* to debate *what power mans wil* (for-sooth) hath in the *Summity* and Apex of *Conversion* to *resist* or to *accept* the Grace of God: and so whether *Moral perswasions* only be not *Sufficient*? or that *Physical Pre-determinations* be not also requisite to *Conversion*? whilest in the mean time, al *those intimate actings* of a soul in turning to God; *The secret particular passages*, both on *Gods part*, and on the *souls part* (which are many and various) by which the soul is won over unto God and Christ; *those treaties* the souls of

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men hold with God and Christ for justifying and Sanctifying Grace, and for union with him: these have been forgotten, or but overly and slightly touched upon, which if our reformed Divines would have made it their work distinctly to have insisted on, out of the scripture and their own experience: *that Glory* would have appear'd therein, which would have put a period unto al those janglings about Free-Wil.

And further to take a serious survey of the present times in this Nation; the *temper of Professors* is such, that it cannot enough be lamented: Ordinarily men enter into and take up a profession of Religion and that with difference from others, upon very cheap Rates. And do *give* and *receive* Honor of being such *to* and *from* one another upon so slender grounds; that we with grief say, there hath been *more of Profession* in these changes, when *less of Regeneration*.

The *Causes* whereof are more than

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of one ſort, or than which we are able to enumerate. Yet for inſtance; *Either* becauſe God hath in the Courſe of his providence involved the *Cauſe of Religion*, and the *Vindication* of *the liberties* of the *ſincere Profeſſors* of it, (formerly ſo much oppreſſed) with ſo high an hand, and out-ſtreched Arm; ſo apparently, that therefore *Carnal men* have fallen in, and mingled themſelves (as that mixt multitude of *Egyptians* who came forth of Egyptian bondage with the Iſraelites) and joyned iſſu therewith, and *Learning* a little to ſpeak the *Iſraelitiſh Language*, and give Religion, and good men good words; and being for the *Common Cauſe*, (as they cal it) they have thereby put themſelves and been received into the Common *Roll* of men *wel affected in Religion*, as wel as *to the publique*.

Or elſe (which we cannot but judge and mention as another Cauſe hereof) it hath been profeſſedly held forth (by men holy and ſpiritual) that *all* that are

are *not ſcandalous in their lives, having in their Knowledg, the Form of Truth*, by Education; adding thereunto ſome *outward holy Duties*. Such Perſons we mean, as formerly were in our Pulpits, plainly tearmed, but *Civil, Moral Chriſtians* (and are really but ſuch kind of *Profeſſors* of *Chriſtianity*, as *Mutatis mutandis*, are found among Turks of *Mahumotaniſm*; who underſtand the Principles of *that Religion*, and are devout in *Duties to God*, required thereby; through the meer efficacy of *Natural Devotion*, and *Education*, the *Laws* and *Cuſtoms* of that Religion; who alſo through *Moral Honeſty*, are not ſcandalous in their Lives.) Such like Perſons amongſt us, have been, and that as a *New Reformation of Religion*, with *ſeparation* alſo from others (the *Ignorant* and *Prophane*) profeſſedly received into the *Communion of Saints*, as *viſible Saints*. This Principle, and Practice, hath (as it muſt needs) weakened and embaſed the antient purer ſtamp of the Doctrine of *Converſion* (as *then* held forth with ſuch evidence

evidence of difference from these mens Profession) not only by encouraging such boldly to take on them to be *Saints* (as it were) by *Authority*; but also by having checked, and flatted the spirits of themselves that would *teach it*, seeing that this *Real Application* in *Practice*, and *Principle*, to such *Moral Christians* as *Saints*, is a manifest *Contradiction* unto al that can be *Doctrinally* said in the Pulpit to the contrary, concerning the *power* of this great work in *true Saints*. And *thus* the *Profession* of *Religion* hath been levelled, and diffused into that *bulk* and *commonness*, that the *true marks* of saving Graces, are (as to the open discerning) much worn out, and wil be more and more, if this should obtain.

Or else (as great a Cause as any other) *a special Profession of Religion* being in *Mode*, and under Countenance: Hence many have been easily moved to see what might be in *Religion*, and so attend to what is said about it; and upon listening thereto, their spirits have been awakened,

wakened, and ſurprized with ſome light, and then with that Light they have grown inquiſitive into what *this* or *that* Party of *Religion* holds; what the *other*, or what a *fourth*. And thinking themſelves at liberty (as the Principle of the times is) to chuſe (as men in a Market) what that Light wil lead them to; they accordingly fal in, either with *this*, or *that* particular perſwaſion: and this is al of many mens *Converſion*. And yet becauſe ſuch become zealouſly addicted to *ſuch*, or *ſuch a way* (ſome of the Profeſſors of each of which, others that differ, own as truly Godly) therfore they are preſently *adopted*, & owned *as Saints*, by the ſeveral Followers of ſuch Opinions: And each ſort thinks much, that thoſe who embrace *their Opinion*, ſhould not be accounted, and eſteemed *Religious* by all others, that do ſincerely profeſſe the power of it. Thus men *Tythe Mint and Cummin*, and leap over the *great things of Regeneration*, namely, *Humiliation for ſin*, the *through ſence of their Na-*

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tural Condition, the *Difficult work of Faith*, to justifie them, *Union* and *Closing* with Christ, *Mortification of lusts*, &c. which works where they are found, and visibly held forth, none are to be disowned for other Opinions consisting with the Foundation; yet so, as without these, no Opinion, of what Elevation soever, can, or doth constitute a man Religious.

Now look, as when among the Jews, *Religion* had run into Factions, and Parties, and the power of it thereby, was wel-nigh lost; God then set down *John Baptist* amongst them, a sowr and severe Preacher, & Urger of the *Doctrine of Repentance*, and preparative Humiliation for sin (which he comparatively to what was brought in by Christ, termeth the *Baptism of Water*) though withal 'tis said, that in the Close of his Doctrine, he pointed unto Christ; *Saying unto the people, that they should beleeve on him that should come after him*; that is, *on Jesus Christ*. Yet this he did but point at: for the ful

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ſtream of his Diſpenſation ran in that other Channel. Of whoſe Miniſtry it is alſo ſaid *Luk.* 1. 16. 17. *That many of the Children of Iſrael ſhould he turn to the Lord, their God. And ſhal go before 'him* (namely Chriſt) *in the ſpirit and power of* Elias *to turn the hearts of the Fathers to their Children, and the Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the juſt to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* The meaning whereof is, he came to reſtore the Doctrine of ſaving Converſion, and in that point to bring and reduce the Children of the Jews back again unto the ſame Principles and wayes (neceſſary to Salvation) by which the Fathers, and all the renowned Saints of the old Teſtament had been brought in unto God. And ſo by that means to become of the ſame Religion (ſaving Converſion being the alone practick Foundation and Centre of all Religion) that the Godly Jews of old were of. So what know we, but that God (in ſome leſſer, proportionate correſpondency, both in reſpect of

perſons and times) may have had this in the eye of all wiſely deſigning Providence to ſet out *this great Authors works* and writings (amongſt the labors of others alſo) upon this very Argument, to bring back, and correct the Errors of the ſpirits of Profeſſors of theſe times (and perhaps by urging too far, and inſiſting too much upon that as *Preparatory*, which includes indeed the beginnings of true *Faith*, (And a man may be held too long *under John* Baptiſts *water*) To rectify thoſe that have ſlipt into *Profeſſion*, and Leapt over all both *true* and *deep Humiliation* for ſin, and *ſence of their natural Condition*; yea and many over Chriſt himſelf too, profeſsing to go to God without him. However, this we may ſay (without diminution to any other or detraction from the Author himſelf, in reſpect of his more rayſed knowledg of Chriſt and Gods free Grace) That if any of our late Preachers and Divines came in the *Spirit and power of John Baptiſt* this man did.

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This deeply humbled man, and as highly raiſed, both in Faith and Communion with Chriſt, the Author of theſe Treatiſes. He had been trained up from his Youth, in the Experience and Tryal of Gods Diſpenſations and Workings this way; and verſ'd in digging into the Mines and Veins of Holy Scriptures, to find how they agreed with his own Experiments. His Soul had traverſed the intricate Meanders, and the darkened (through temptations) windings of this narrow paſſage and entrance into Life (*and few there be that find it.*) And by deep reflections upon every ſtep of Gods Procedure with himſelf, hath deſcried thoſe falſe and crooked by-waies, which at every ſtep, *darkened man* (who *errs in his heart, not having the knowledg of Gods waies*) is apt to go aſtray when they have but inferior workings of the Spirit on them, from the way of Life, which only thoſe do find that are un-erringly *guided* by the Holy Spirit (peculiar to the Elect) *into the waies of Peace.* And

And whereas there hath been publiſhed long ſince, many Parts and Pieces of this Author, upon this Argument, Sermon-wiſe preach'd by him here in *England* (which in the preaching of them did enlighten all thoſe Parts) Yet having been taken by an unskilful hand, which upon his recels into thoſe remoter parts of the World, was bold without his privity or conſent to print and publiſh them (one of the greateſt injuries which can be done to any man) it came to paſs his genuine meaning, and this in points of ſo high a Nature, and in ſome things differing from the Common Opinion, was diverted in thoſe printed Sermons from the fair and cleer draught of his own Notions and Intentions, becauſe ſo utterly deformed and miſ-repreſented in multitudes of paſſages; And in the reſt but imperfectly and crudely ſet forth.

Here, in theſe Treatiſes, thou *haſt* his Heart from his *own Hand*, his own Thoughts drawn by his own Penſil.

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This is all truly and purely his own, not as preached only, but as *written by himself* in order to the Preſs; which may be a great ſatisfaction to all that honored and loved him (as who that was good, and knew him, did not?) eſpecially thoſe that received benefit by thoſe other imperfect Editions. And we cannot but look at it as a bleſſed Providence of God, that the publiſhing of the ſame by others (in that manner that hath been mentioned) ſhould have provoked him, and that by the excitation of the Church (whereof he was the Paſtor in *New-England*) to go over again the ſame Materials in the Courſe of his Miniſtry amongſt them, in order to the perfecting of it by his own hand for publick Light, thereby to vindicate both himſelf and it from that wrong which otherwiſe had remained for ever irrecompenſible.

And hereby it came to paſs (that ſo far as he hath proceeded) this Subject came to have a *third Concoction* in the Heart

Heart and Head of him that was one of the moſt experienced Chriſtians, and of acuteſt Abilities that have been living in our Age. He *Preach'd* more briefly of this Subject *firſt*, whilſt he was *Fellow* and *Chatechiſt* in *Emanuel Colledg* in *Cambridg*. The Notes of which, were then ſo eſteemed, that many Copies thereof, were by many that heard not the Sermons, written out, and are yet extant by them. And then again, a *Second time*, many yeers after, more largely at *Great Chelmsford* in *Eſſex*; the Product of which, was thoſe Books of Sermons that have gone under his Name. And *Laſt* of all; *now* in *New-England*, and that in, and to a *ſetled Church* of Saints, to which the Promiſe is made of being, *The Seat and Pillar of Truth*; and in which all Ordinances ſet as the Loadſtone in the Steel, have the greater power and energie: In which the Preſence of Chriſt breaks forth, and *all his Springs* are found therein.

And truly we need not wonder that God

God ſet his heart and thoughts a work ſo much, and ſo repeatedly about this Subject. We ſee that the *Holy Ghoſt* himſelf, the *Author of this Work* of *Converſion*, doth ſomtimes, and that in an eminent manner, go over the *whol of that Work* again and again in the hearts of Chriſtians, whom God means to make great in his Church: as in *Peter*, *When thou art converted &c.* who was yet converted already, And to the Diſciples, *Except ye be converted &c.* And the *coming of the Holy Ghoſt* upon them, at and after *Pentecoſt*, was as a *New Converſion* unto them, making them to differ as much *from themſelves*, in *what* they were *afore*, as well-nigh they themſelves (though afore truly wrought on) did then differ from other men. The Spirit of God himſelf goes over this Work afreſh in all the parts of it: As to *humble* anew, to *draw to Chriſt*, to *change* and raiſe *the heart* to higher ſtrains of *Holineſs*. And when ſo, then his *Second* Work excels the *Firſt*, that it *comes not*

into

into mind; and his *Third* the *Second*, that it *ceaſeth* (as it were) to *be remembred*; (as the Prophet in other Works of Wonder ſpeaks) for thereby he every time *Spiritualliz*eth the heart ſtill *more*, *refineth* it from *Hypocriſie*, and makes it *double refined*; cauſeth the heart to come forth from each new caſt and moulding, with a deeper and fairer impreſsion of his Image and Glory. If then the *Holy Ghoſt* (*the Writer of his Law in the Heart*) ſets that high value upon that Work of his, that he vouchſafeth to take the pains to *write it over and over again* in the *ſame Tablet*; Let it be no *Diminution* to this great Author, but let us bleſs God rather for the *Providence*, that the ſame Divine Hand and Spirit ſhould ſet him this Task, to take the *Doctrine* of *this Work* into a ſecond, yea a third Review; and thereby make it as it were, the τὸ ἔργον, *the Work of his Life*.

Only thus it is, That the other *Great Points*, as *Union with Chriſt*, *Juſtification*, *Adoption*, *Sanctification*, and *Glory* (which Subjects,

Subjects, as he was able for, so his heart was most in them) he hath left unfinished: And so thereby (as is most likely) multitudes of precious, yea glorious thoughts, which he might have reserved (as often falls out to Preachers and Writers) for those higher Subjects, as the Close, and Centre, and Crown of what forewent, as preparative thereto, are now perished, and laid in the dust with him. *None but Christ was ever yet able to finish all that Work which was in his Heart to do.* Farewel.

Thomas Goodwyn,

Philip Nye.



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The Application of Redemption, by the effectual work of the Word and Spirit of Christ, for the bringing home of lost Sinners to God.

The Ninth Book.

Isaiah, 57. 15.

Thus saith He that is the High, and the Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the High and the Holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit.

THe Work of Preparation having Two Parts:

First, The Lords manner of Dispensation as he is pleased to deal with the Soul, for the setting up the praise of his Rich and Glorious Grace: and therefore with a holy kind of Violence he plucks the Sinner

from his sins unto himself, and his Christ. This hath been dispatched already in the former Discourse.

The Second now follows: And that is the Frame and Disposition which is wrought in the Hearts of such as the Lord hath purposed to save, and to whom he hath dispensed himself in that gracious Work of his.

This Disposition consists especially in Two Things { *Contrition*, *Humiliation*.

That so I may follow the Phrase of Scripture, and retain the Lords own Words in the Text, where the Lord saith, that he dwels with him that is *of an humble and contrite Heart*.

To omit al manner of Coherence, and other Circumstances, we will pass all the other Specials in the Verse, and point at that Particular which will suit our proceeding, and may afford ground to the following Discourse, that we may go no further than we see the Pillar of Fire, the Lord in his Truth to go before us. We shal fasten then upon the last words only, as those that fit our Intendment.

To make way for our selves in short, there is one word alone to be opened, that so the Point may be better fitted for our Application; we must know what it is *to dwel*, or how *God* is said to *dwell in a contrite and humble heart?*

I Answer, To Dwell implies Three Things.

1. First, That the Lord owns such as those in whom he hath an especial interest, and claims a special propriety, as though he left all the rest of man-kind to lie wast as a Common, that the World, and the Devil, and Sin may possess, and use at their pleasure, reserving the Honor of his Justice, which by a strong hand he will exact as a Tribute due to himself out of all things in Heaven and Earth, and Hell and all; but persons whom he thus fits, he reserves for his own special Improvement. As Princes and Persons of place and quality, do lease out, and let some

ſome Forreſts and Commons to the Inhabitants bordering thereabout, reſerving ſome acknowledgment of Fealty and Royalty to themſelves, but the choyce and beſt Pallaces or Granges of greateſt worth, and profit, they reſerve for their own peculiar to inhabit in. So here, the Lord leaſeth out the World, and the wicked in it to the Devil and his Angels, and Inſtruments, reſerving a Royalty and Prerogative to himſelf, as that he will have his Homage and Acknowledgment of dependance upon himſelf; but his broken-hearted ones are his own for his own Improvement, *Deut.* 32. 8, 9. *When the moſt High divided to the Nations their Inheritance, and ſeparated the ſons of* Adam, *he ſet the bounds of his People according to the number of the Children of Iſrael, for the Lords Portion is his People Iſrael, the Lot of his Inheritance: Ye are the Temple of the Living God*; 2 Cor. 6. 16. Yea, to them the Lord himſelf ſaies, *Ye are my People, and they ſhall ſay, thou art my God*, Zach. 13. laſt. Therefore he profeſſeth, that though in the courſe of his Providence he goes on progreſs over all the world, yet he takes up his dwelling and abode amongſt his own People. For,

Secondly, Where a man dwels, as he owns the houſe, ſo he takes up his abode there, it is the place of his reſidence; we ſay any may know where to ſeek men, or where to find them, at home, at their own houſe: That's the difference between Inning and Dwelling; we Inn at a place in our paſſing by, when we take repaſt only, and bait, but depart preſently, intending not to ſtay; but where we dwel, we ſettle our abode, we take up our ſtand there, and ſtir no further. So the Lord is ſaid then to dwel in the Soul, when he vouchſafes the conſtant expreſſion of his peculiar preſence and aſſiſtance to the ſoul. True it is that the Lord fills Heaven and Earth with his preſence, yea, the Heaven of Heavens is not able to contain him, *Jer.* 23. 24. His infinite Being is every where, and one and the ſame every where in re- 2.

gard of himself; because his being is most simple, and not subject to any shadow of change, being all one with himself. Yet he is said to take up his abode in a special manner, when he doth put forth the peculiar expression of his Work; as in Heaven he dwels, because he puts forth the constant expression of his Glory, and that in the full brightness of it without any alteration and change. Here in this Spiritual Temple, the Souls of his Saints, he puts forth the peculiar expression of the constant assistance of his blessed Spirit. *I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever*, John 14. 16. 1 Joh. 2. 23. *Ye have received an anointing which abideth in you.*

3. Dwelling, if it be attributed to the chiefest Inhabitant and Owner of the House, it implies also the ruling and ordering of the occasions that come under hand there, the exercising of the Government of the house and family where the Owner is, and dwels. He that lodgeth at a House as a stranger, comes to an Inn as a Passenger, he takes what he finds, hath what he can receive of kindness and courtesie; but the Owner is the Commander of the House where he dwels, and the orderer of all the Affairs that appertain thereunto. So doth the Lord with a broken Heart. Thus we are said to *live in the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. And it's that which follows by Inference upon this ground, *John* 15. 4. 5. *If I abide in you, and you abide in me, you shal bring forth much fruit*; and therefore its added also in this place, that the Lord dwels in the contrite and humble heart *to receive the Spirit* of the contrite ones, they yeeld themselves to be acted by him, and they shall be acted and quickened by him to Eternal Life.

So that the full meaning is, The contrite and humble heart is such to whom the Lord vouchsafes acceptance, special presence and abode, and peculiar guidance; he owns him, abides with him, and rules in him for ever.

True,

True, it is ſaid Chriſt dwels in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. and as many as beleeve in him, they receive him, *John* 1. 12. That is done as by the next and immediate hand, by which we lay hold on Chriſt, and give entertainment to him; but unleſs the heart be broken and humbled, we cannot receive Faith, that we may receive Chriſt. *And while the ſoul is thus breaking and humbling, Faith alſo is coming* in a right ſenſe, rightly underſtood; whereof we ſhal ſpeak ſomwhat largely, if the Lord give us leave to come to that place.

The Words thus opened, the Point is the very letter of the Text, which looks full upon every Hearer or Reader that will look upon the Text.

The Heart muſt be broken and humbled, before the Lord will own it as His, take up his abode with it, and rule in it. Doct.

There muſt be Contrition and Humiliation before the Lord comes to take poſſeſſion; the Houſe muſt be aired and fitted before it comes to be inhabited, ſwept by brokenneſs and emptineſs of Spirit, before the Lord will come to ſet up his abode in it. This was typified in the paſſage of the Children of Iſrael towards the promiſed Land; they muſt come into, and go through a vaſt and a roaring Wilderneſs, where they muſt be bruiſed with many preſſures, humbled under many overbearing difficulties, they were to meet withal before they could poſſeſs that good Land which abounded with all proſperity, flowed with Milk and Honey. The Truth of this Type, the Prophet *Hoſea* explains, and expreſſeth at large in the Lords dealing with his People in regard of their Spiritual Condition, *Hoſ.* 2. 14, 15. *I will lead her into the wilderneſs*, and break her heart with many bruiſing Miſeries, and *then I will ſpeak kindly to her heart, and will give her the Valley of Achor for*

for a door of hope; the ſtory you may recal out of *Joſ.* 7. 28. when *Achan* had offended in the execrable thing, and the hearts of the Iſraelites were diſcomfited and failed, like water ſpilt upon the ground, becauſe they had cauſed the Lord to depart away from them, the Text ſaies, they having found out the offender by lot, they ſtoned him, and they ſaid thou haſt troubled Iſrael, we will trouble thee, and they called it *the Valley of Achor*, and after that God ſupported their hearts with hope, and encouraged them with ſucceſs, both in prevailing over their Enemies, and in poſſeſſing the Land. So it ſhall be Spiritually, the Valley of Conſternation, perplexity of Spirit, and brokenneſs of heart, is the very gale and entrance of any ſound hope, and aſſured expectation of good. This I take to be the true meaning and intendment of the place, and part of the deſcription of a good Hearer, *Luke* 8. 15. *Who with an honeſt and good heart receives the Word, and keeps it*, by ſtrong hand, *and brings forth fruit with patience*; the fruit is Obedience, Patience is part of Sanctification, and the holy diſpoſition of heart, that muſt be in the heart, that brings and bears ſuch fruit, that which makes the heart good is Faith in Vocation, which enables the ſoul to lay hold upon Chriſt in the Word, and from him to receive that lively vertue of Patience, and readineſs to every holy word and work. And *an honeſt heart is a contrite and humble heart*, ſo rightly prepared that Faith is infuſed, and the ſoul thereby carried unto Chriſt, and quickened with patience to perſevere in good Duties. As we ſay of Grounds before we caſt in Seed; there is two things to be attended there, It muſt be a fit ground, and a fat ground; the ground is fit when the weeds and green ſword are plowed up, and the ſoyl there, and made mould: And this is done in Contrition and Humiliation; then it muſt be a fat ground, the ſoyl muſt have heart, we ſay the ground is plowed well, and lies well, but it's worn out, it's out of heart: Now Faith fats

fats the ſoyl, furniſheth the ſoul with ability to faſten upon Chriſt, and ſo to receive the Seed of the Word, and the Graces of Sanctification, and thence it produceth good fruit in Obedience: Upon this condition Gods favor is promiſed, *Pſal.* 34.18. *The Lord is nigh to them that be of a contrite ſpirit, and ſaveth them that be of a broken heart.* Iſay 61. 3. *He gives the Garment of praiſe to thoſe that have had the ſpirit of heavineſs*; it will ſuit none, fit none, it's prepared for none but ſuch, it's their Livery only. Upon this condition it is obtained, *Mat.* 18. 3. *Unleſs ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye can in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* 2 Chron. 33. 12. It's ſaid of *Mannaſſeh, he humbled himſelf greatly*, and made ſupplication, and the Lord *was intreated of him*; ſuch perſons and ſervices are highly accepted, *Pſal.* 51. 17. *A broken and contrite heart O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe*, nay, he wil undoubtedly accept of it.

The Reaſons of the Point are taken, partly in regard of the heart, which without theſe will neither be fitted nor enabled to act upon God in Chriſt for any good; partly in regard of God, all his Ordinances and Diſpenſations will be unprofitable, and unable to do that good which he intends, and we need.

To the firſt in regard of our Hearts; thoſe Lets and impediments which put a kind of incapability, yea, and impoſſibility upon the ſoul, whereby the coming of Faith into the Heart, and ſo the entrance and reſidence of the Spirit are hindred, are by this diſpoſition wrought, and removed. Theſe Impediments are two: *Reaſ.* 1.

The firſt which ſtops the way and work of Faith is, a ſetled kind of contentedneſs in our corrupt condition, and the blind, yet bold and preſumptuous confidence that a natural man hath, and would maintain of his good condition. Each man ſits down willingly, well apaid with his own eſtate and portion, ſees no need of any change, and therefore not willing to hear of it. Each 1.

man

man is so full of self-love that he is loth to pass a sentence against his own soul, to become a judg and self-condemner, and consequently an executioner of all his hopes and comforts at once, and so put his happiness and help out of his own hand. Besides, we are Naturally afraid (out of the privy, yet direful guilt of our own Consciences) to profess the wretchedness of our own miserable and damnable Condition, as to put it upon a peremptory conclusion, and that beyond question, I am undone, I am a damned man, in the Gall of bitterness, in the bonds of iniquity, lest they should stir such horrors, which they are neither able to quiet, nor yet able to bear. And therefore out of the presumption of their own hearts, they would easily perswade and delude themselves, they have no cause to alter their condition, and therfore they should not endeavor it. Hence the carnal heart is said to bear up himself against all the assaults of the Word, *Deut.* 29. 19. *When all the Curses of the Law were denounced* with never so much evidence, yet the presumptuous sinner *blesseth himself*, promiseth all good to himself, and secretly feeds himself with vain hopes that he shal attain it, therfore he wil not stir to seek for a better estate, nor yet receive it if offered, *Job*, 22. 17. *They say unto the Almighty, depart from us, we desire not the knowledg of his waies*: do Ministers press them, do others perswade them to a more serious and narrow search, to get more grounded assurance of their estate in Grace, they profess they bid them to their loss, they think they need not be better, nor do they desire to be other. It is impossible upon these terms that ever the soul should be carried by Faith unto God.

For to be contented and quieted with our condition, as that which best pleaseth, and yet to seek out for another, are things contradictory. And yet this Faith doth, For he that is in Christ, is a new Creature, behold all things are become new, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. he must have new comforts,

comforts, new desires, new hopes, therfore the heart must be broken to pieces under the weight of the evil of sin, and the Curses due to the old condition, before this wil part; for that the word here used with great elegancy and pregnancy implies, viz. by an oppressing weight to be pashed to pouder and dust. So the Psalmist useth it, *Psal.* 90. 3. Thou turnest man to pouder, to the dust of death: when a mans composition is dissolved, and the body returned again into its first principle; so the word here by way of resemblance, implies that the soul should find his corruption his greatest oppression, so that the composition betwixt sin and his soul should be dissolved and taken down, and the nature of man return to his first principles, and primitive disposition, that he sees an absolute necessity to change, and then he will seek and be willing to receive a change: *The whol need no Physitian*, and therefore will not seek; *but the sick* that need, will be content to receive; The issue is, If the soul be contented with its sinful condition, and would not have a change, then it cannot be under the power of Faith, or receive that which will bring a change; but before the soul be broken under the pressure of sin, it would not have a change, therefore so long it cannot be under the power of Faith.

Be it granted that the soul finds sin as a plague, and therefore would be preserved from the evil of it: the second impediment which wholly keeps out Faith is this, When the sinner expects supply and succor from his own sufficiency, either outward excellencies, abilities of Nature, or common Graces, or the beauty of some performances which issue from any of these: For this is Natural to all men ever since Innocency, That since the staff was put into his own hand, and then needed not, nay should not deny their own strength, therefore to this day this practice of old *Adam* remains still in all his posterity, they will scramble for their own Comforts and try the utmost of their own strength, to help themselves 2.

rather than be beholding to another to help them: Hence in caſes of Conſcience and trouble, men are ſo ready to reſolve, ſo apt and free to promiſe and profeſs amendment, what they will do, and others ſhall ſee it as well as they reſolve it, and ſo alas it comes to nothing in concluſion, either they fall back unto their baſe courſes, when horror and fear is over, or elſe waſting away into a wearish formality, and ſo periſh in their Hypocriſie. This is an apparent bar to faith, which is the going out of the ſoul to fetch all life and power from another. Now wholly to be in our ſelves, and to ſtay upon our own ability, and yet to go out of himſelf to Chriſt and receive all from his ſufficiency, are things which cannot ſtand together, *I came not to call the righteous*, Mat. 9. 13. *While they ſought to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, they did not ſubmit to the Righteouſneſs of God.

Hence therefore the ſecond work of Humiliation is required, whereby God plucks away all his props, and emptieth him wholly of what he hath or ſeemeth to have. For pride (unto which Humiliation is oppoſite) is but the rankneſs of praiſe, and praiſe is a fruit of a cauſe by counſel, that hath power to do or not to do this or that, as he ſees fit: Humiliation is the utter nothingneſs of the ſoul, that we have no power, it's not in our choyce to diſpoſe of our ſelves, nor yet to diſpoſe of that which another gives, nor yet ſafe to repine at his diſpoſe: In a word, as in a Scion before it be ingrafted into another ſtock, it muſt be cut off from the old, and pared, and then implanted. In Contrition we are cut off; in Humiliation pared, and ſo fit to be implanted into Chriſt by Faith.

Reaſ. 2. In regard of God, without this diſpoſition his Word will not, nay cannot take any place in us, or prevail with us for our good: Counſels, and Commands, and Comforts, or whatever Diſpenſations, they fal as water upon a Rock, when adminiſtred to a hard heart, they enter not, prevail

prevail not, profit not at all. As Christ told the Jews, John, 8.37. *My Word takes no place in you*, and Zach. 7. 11, 12. *They hardened their hearts as an Adamant, &c.*

A word of terror to dash the hopes, and sink the hearts of all haughty and hard hearted sinners, God owns not such, will never vouchsafe his gracious presence with them, or his Blessing upon them for good; be where they will, dwell where they will, the Lord is not with them, nor will dwel in them, by his comforting, quickening, saving presence: Hear and fear then all you stout-hearted, stubborn, and rebellious Creatures, whose consciences can evidence that the day is yet to dawn, the hour yet to come, that ever you found your sins a pressure to you, they have been your past-time and delight in which you have pleased your selves, so far from being troubled for your evils that it is your only trouble you may not commit them with content, and without controul, you are troubled with Admonitions, and Counsels, and Commands, and Threatnings that cross you in your sins. You were never broken-hearted here for your abominations, know assuredly that you wil burn for them one day; your proud hearts were never abased, and laid in the dust, the Lord will ruinate both you and them. Never expect a good look from God, set your heart at rest for that, you may draw the Eyes of others after you, make many of your deluded followers and Favorites to look upon you, but the Lord will not come neer, nor once cast a loving look towards you, Psal. 138.6 *Though the Lord be high, he hath respect to the lowly, but he knows the proud afar off.* Nay, the great God of Heaven and Earth is up in Arms against thee, he is upon the March to work thy destruction, James, 4.6. *The Lord resists the proud, but he gives Grace to the humble*; all Grace is in his gift, and he doles it only to the bruised and abased; but there is no thought nor expectation that thou shalt receive any

Use, 1.

Grace, nay, that Grace that thy rebellious and proud heart hath oppoſed and reſiſted, will work thy own ruine. Thou art the mark of Gods direful indignation and vengeance, he plants all his Forces againſt thee; If all the Wiſdom in Heaven can contrive thy confuſion, all the Power in Heaven work it, all the Juſtice there determine it, it ſhall be done. God is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, he ſaveth ſuch as be of a broken ſpirit, *Pſal.* 34. 18. true, and mark it, *Of ſuch*, but ſuch thou art not, ſuch thou derideſt, ſcorneſt, whoſe hearts fail them under the weight of their abominations, thou lookeſt at them as mopiſh, ſilly, deſpicable men, well, ſuch you ſhall ſee ſaved for ever, when ſuch untamed, preſumptuous, proud wretches as thou art ſhall be turned into Hell.

Obj. But we do ſee our ſins, and have had many girds and galls of Conſcience for them.

Anſ. True, It may be there hath been ſome blows upon thine heart, Conſcience it hath ſmitten thee, the hammer of the Word, it hath laid ſome ſtroaks, but it hath not broken thy heart to this day; and that is thus diſcerned (to go no further now than the very expreſſion of the Text.)

If thy ſoul be beaten to pouder with this oppreſſion of thy diſtempers (for ſo this brokenneſs of heart was opened before) then as it is with the hardeſt flints, when they are broken to duſt, they are eaſily yielding, and give way to take the impreſſion of the hand, or whatever is laid upon them: The ſtone which out of its hardneſs before, oppoſed and ſtarted aſide from the ſtrongeſt ſtroak that was laid, now its turned into duſt the leaſt and eaſieſt touch leaves a print and impreſſion upon it; ſo it is expounded, as appears in this oppoſition, 2 *Chron.* 30. 8. *Be not ſtiff-necked, but yield your ſelves.* Obſerve then, is it ſo? when the power of the Word comes, the Scriptures are pregnant, Arguments undeniable, Counſels ſweet, Reproofs ſharp and ſeaſonable, yet thy Heart

heart ſhifts and ſtarts aſide, and hits back the Authority of the truth, which thou canſt not gain-ſay. The heart may be battered, but it was never broken, it may be overpowred and awed, but it was never humbled to this day. Its that of *Prov.* 3. 32. The froward in heart is an abomination to the Lord, but the upright, he that lies level, and bows to the Truth, are his delight. A froward man, that is, he that turns off from the Authority of the Truth: Is this thy temper? thy heart was never broken to duſt to this day, but frampful and froward, know thou art an abomination to the Lord. If thou ſhouldſt go to Heaven to dwel there, truly God would go out of Heaven, he would not dwell with thee.

Pharaoh is the pattern of all proud Hearts, he hardened himſelf in his wickedneſs againſt the Word of the Lord. But a broken and humble heart, either lies right, or will come right, it will come to that bent of the Rule that is revealed: Hard things makes that which is moſt ſoft to aſſimilate to them; eaſie and yielding things aſſimilate to whatever they cloſe: ſo Water in a round Veſſel takes that form, in a three ſquare Veſſel, takes that. So here.

Inſtruction, To teach us to delight in ſuch, to deſire the Society of ſuch as are contrite and humble men, to dwel there where God dwels; ſeem their perſons never ſo mean, their conditions never ſo baſe, their eſtates never ſo low, themſelves never ſo deſpicable, yet if they be men of broken Spirits, God is with them. Go into their Societies as men that reſolve to go to the Court; for where the King is, the Court is; and where God is, Heaven is: the Lord hath two Thrones; the one of Glory in Heaven, where he is all in all to his; another here on Earth, an humble heart, where he doth all only of himſelf, and for himſelf. Therefore as they in *Zachary*, 8. laſt, *Ten men ſhall lay hold on the skirt of a Jew, and they ſhall ſay, we will go with you, for we have heard God is with you.* Much more here, for the Lord

Uſe, 2.

Obſerve here.

Lord is not only with humble hearts, but he dwels in them; we ſhould therfore entertain ſuch Servants into our Families, ſuch Inhabitants into Plantations, and ſuch Members into Congregations, for ſo you entertain God himſelf; Reſolve as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Entreat me not to forſake thee, for where thou liveſt, I will live, thy people ſhall be my people, thy God my God, where thou dieſt I will die, and there will I be buried, and nothing but death ſhall part thee and me.* Nay, go further, ye bleſſed Spirits (ſay) death ſhall not part us, I will be broken-hearted with you, and humble with you, and God ſhall dwel in us, and we ſhal dwel with him in Heaven for ever. Oh now ye are right, keep here, and be happy here for ever.

Uſe, 3. Exhortation, To perſwade us all, and to prevail with us to take the right way to enjoy Gods preſence, not only to ſeek for mercy, but ſeek it in Gods Order, not only to covet Gods preſence, but in Gods manner; labor to be humble and broken-hearted Chriſtians: then expect we may that the Lord will manifeſt the preſence of his Grace and Spirit with us, and in us, but not elſe: Every man catcheth at Chriſt, and Mercy, and Comfort, but not in a right Method, and therefore they loſe him, and their labor alſo. This is Gods order: Firſt be humble and broken, and then he will revive your Spirits with his preſence, 2. *Cor.* 6. 19. *Come out from among them, and touch no unclean thing; then I will receive you, and be a Father to you.* In a word, ſtrive to enter in at the ſtraight Gate of Contrition and Humiliation, and then you will hit the right way to Chriſt and eternal Life.

The

The Tenth Book.

ACTS, 2. 37.

And when they heard this, they were pricked in their Hearts, and ſaid unto them, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?

THere be two Things eſpecially obſervable in that diſpoſition of Heart, which the Lord requires and works in thoſe he will draw to Chriſt, *Contrition*, and *Humiliation*. The neceſſity of both theſe, we declared the laſt day, as that they were not only to be looked at for complement and conveniency, but ſuch as are of neceſſity required, that the heart may be fitted for the impreſſion of Faith, and by it for the entertainment of the Lord Chriſt; for if the ſinner be ſo ſettled in ſecure Contentment of his own condition as that he thinks he need not change; or if he muſt, he is ſo confident of his own ability, that he can change himſelf, and out of himſelf, and out of his own ſtrength relieve himſelf, he wil never go out to another for ſuccor and ſupply. Contrition looſens a man from his ſin, makes him ſee an abſolute neceſſity to be another man, or elſe he is a damned man. Humiliation looſens a man from himſelf, makes him ſee an utter inſufficiency in what he hath or doth, for to procure the leaſt ſpiritual relief unto his ſoul; now the Coaſt is cleer, that Faith may come to us, and we by that be enabled to come to Chriſt.

We

We are now to purſue theſe two according to the order propounded. And firſt of the former, the Sum of which Work may thus be deſcribed:

Contrition is that Preparative Diſpoſition of Heart, when by the ſight of ſin, and the puniſhment due to the ſame, the ſoul is brought to ſound ſorrow for it, and ſo brought to deteſt it, and to ſequeſter it ſelf from it.

The Deſcription ſtands upon two Paſſages mainly.

I. The Cauſes which bring in this Contrition.
   1. Sight of Sin.
   2. Sorrow for Sin.

II. The Effects which nextly diſcover this, and whereby it comes to be known.
   1. Deteſtation of Sin.
   2. Sequeſtration from ſin.

And here I deſire that ſtill may be remembred which I mentioned and diſcovered before, That all theſe are things rather wrought upon us by the impreſſion and motion of the Spirit, than performed by any inward principle, and habitual power of Grace received, and this the manner of the expreſſions in the words of the deſcription plainly intimates; *the ſoul brought* to ſee his ſins, *brought* to ſorrow for them, *brought* to deteſt them, and ſequeſter it ſelf from them: For the ſinner would not look upon the loathſomneſs of his ſoul, and the filth of his ſinful diſtempers, but the Lord laies it before him, and holds his apprehenſion to it, follows him with the remembrance of it, and forceth his thoughts to give attendance thereunto. *Pſal.* 51. 3. *My ſin is ever before me*; which way ſoever he turns his thoughts, his ſins ſtared him in the face, and were full in his view; they dwelt with him, and were dayly in his preſence, that where ever he was, they were, he could not look off from them, look which way he would.

2. The

2. The ſinner would ſhake off the ſorrow that now ſeizeth upon him, and ſeems to overbear him like a mighty ſtream, he labors to beat back the blow, and to make an eſcape from under the ſtroke of the Truth that ſtabs and wounds his heart, with the direful expreſſion of Gods diſpleaſure, and dreadfulneſs of the evil that doth attend him; but he can neither avoid it, nor remove it, neither keep himſelf from the wound, nor cure it, *Pſal.* 40. *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, that I cannot look up*: a ſimilitude taken from the Prey that flies from the Purſuer, though he would have fled from the terrors of the Almighty, wreſted and reſcued himſelf from under the attachment, yet they overtake him, and take ſuch hold of him that he cannot eſcape: *Pſal.* 38. 2. Thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thine hand preſſeth me ſore; he would have plucked out the Arrows of Gods indignation, but his skil and ſtrength failed him, he could not be eaſed, they could not be removed from him: until at length, the ſoul feeling the wrath of the Almighty, and ſeeing no way to avoid an everlaſting ſeparation from the Lord, if yet his ſins be entertained by him, being thus preſſed by the power of that undeniable Truth, which laies open the loathſomneſs of his ſin, and makes him feel the bitterneſs thereof, he is carried with deteſtation againſt it, and driven to make a ſequeſtration from it. Of the fuller meaning of both theſe, when we ſhal come to the particular ſcanning of them, in their proper place.

For the ground of my following diſcourſe I have taken the words of the Text, in which you have the grounds and hints of all the former Truths, not implyed only by way of collection, but expreſly ſet down, and profeſſedly aimed at as evidently diſcovering the manner of Gods dealing herein.

The knowledg of their ſins ſet down with the Cauſes thereof, *when they heard theſe things.* *Hearing*] not that every hearing, or bare hearing would ſerve the turn, 1.

for it's beyond queſtion, that thouſands do, and many there did hear thoſe ſavory Truths ſeaſonably diſpenſed by *Peter*, which were never either throughly convinced, nor had their hearts in any manner affected therewith; the meaning therefore muſt needs be this, When by their hearing they rightly diſcerned, and cleerly conceived thoſe things, *i. e.* the nature of thoſe ſins, which *Peter* had diſcovered and charged ſo punctually upon them; *Let all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly that God hath made that Jeſus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Chriſt.* When they ſo heard that they yielded and aſſented fully to that which was ſo peremptorily profeſſed by the Apoſtle, then they were pricked to the heart.

We have then here the ſight and knowledg of their ſin, together with the Cauſes by which they came to attain it, and thoſe were here intimated in the words.

1. Their Conviction, in that they ſtood here indited and accuſed by *Peter*, and condemned in their own Conſciences that they were the guilty perſons, guilty of no leſs than the blood of the Lord Jeſus the Son of God, and Savior of the World, who is now advanced at Gods right hand as Lord and King, and ſhall come in flaming fire as a Judg to condemn them for their bloody ſins; who came in the fleſh as a Redeemer to ſave them from their ſins: But they rejected him and their own mercy and ſafety; and this ſaies the Apoſtle admits no oppoſition, no diſputation at all, *Let the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly,* ασφαλως, It's a Truth that ſtands as Mount Zion, that cannot be ſtirred: it is beyond all cavelling, queſtioning, doubting, beyond all probability or poſſibility to be other, a Truth not ſubject to any ſlipping or uncertainty; ſo the word ſignifies.

2. The particular application that the Apoſtle here uſeth of their ſpecial ſins, he doth not hover in generals, ſhoot at rovers, but lets fly point blank in the faces of them; *This Jeſus whom ye have crucified.* He names not

not any other, blames not any other now, ſaies not *Judas* was a wretch that betraied Chriſt, the Soldiers cruel and injurious that took him and bound him; *Pilate* baſely fearful and unjuſt that condemned him, he will not now ſpeak to men abſent; but *you are they that crucified him*, you that *cried, let his blood be upon us*, you ſhall have blood enough, plagues enough: this particular application ſets hard, ſinks deep, they heard theſe their ſins thus ripped up, and themſelves arreſted for them.

There is a ſerious Meditation and attention here alſo implyed. The word is in the Participle *Hearing*, noting a continued act; *Hearing, hearing* theſe ſadly attending and pondering of them in their thoughts, they came then to be pierced. Thus we have the ſight of their ſins here laid open to us, together with the Cauſes thereof. 3.

The ſecond thing in this contrition, is ſound and through ſorrow, and that is expreſſed in the next Phraſe, they were pierced not in their eyes only, which made them weep, but in their hearts, which made them bleed inwardly with Godly ſorrow. 2.

Their deteſtation and ſequeſtration appears in the laſt words, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* we will do any thing, ſuffer any thing, command what you wil, enjoyn what you pleaſe, be it never ſo hard, we will endeavor it; never ſo croſs to our hearts or comforts, we will bear it; better be any thing than be thus vile, let's be in any condition, that once we might be freed from this ſinful and accurſed condition, in which we be. 3.

We have taken liberty to lay our our Work with as much plainneſs and openneſs of order as we may; becauſe we ſhall have occaſion to mind you of the particulars in our future proceeding, and how the ſeveral truths ſerve each others turn, in their place and order.

Before we come to the Particulars, one Point lies in the very entrance, which will be very ſerviceable to

make way for all the Truths following, and therefore we ſhall take in that at this time, that it may be as an Harbenger to make room for all the reſt. And it ariſeth from a right conſideration of the parties to whom *Peter* here ſpeaks, and with whom his word ſo prevailed, and took place. In the 36. verſe he tels them, that ſame Jeſus whom *ye have crucified.* They were therefore ſuch as had rejected, blaſphemed, crucified the Lord of Glory; thoſe who in a bloody manner took away the life of Chriſt, who came to take away their ſins. Is it poſſible, is it credible, that ever mercy ſhould be extended unto ſuch? that ever good ſhould be wrought in ſuch? Yes, Lo here, *When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts.* They whoſe hands were imbrewed in the blood of Jeſus, their hearts are now wounded with Godly ſorrow, and ſo made fit to receive Grace and Mercy.

Hence the Doctrine is,

Doct. *Stubborn and bloody ſinners, may be made broken-hearted ſinners*: Bloody, helliſh, abominable ſinners may yet obtain broken hearts; worſe than theſe could hardly be conceived or imagined, and yet God makes work of theſe knotty wayward Spirits; It was ſaid of him that betrayed Chriſt, *it had been good for him that he had never been born.* What ſhall we ſay of them that murdered our Savior? they are in the higheſt rank of the moſt wicked men that ever were born, yet even ſuch as theſe, who alſo oppoſed the Word and Goſpel of Grace, the Diſciples and Apoſtles, the Preachers and Publiſhers of Grace, the Author and God of Grace; yet ſuch as theſe have now their hearts broken, and in ſome meaſure prepared to be partakers thereof.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1. 29. That they were *full of all unrighteouſneß*; there can hardly be added any thing to the largeneſs of the expreſſion: No ſin worſe for the kind, more for the number, greater for the meaſure, for they had *all unrighteouſneß*, all the

the kinds of evil, and all degrees in the largeſt extent they were full, and yet of ſuch the Apoſtle profeſſeth 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. when he had mentioned a heap of moſt loathſom and hideous abominations; *Know ye not that no unrighteous perſon ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, ſelf-Polluters, Extortioners, Covetous perſons, ſhall ever enter into the Kingdom of God*: then verſe 11. *And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Some ſuch as theſe were ſavingly brought home to God. Yea, when corruption becomes like an old cankered ſore of long continuance, and the ſinner incorrigible under all the choyceſt means that have been uſed, yet then the Lord works the Cure, *Iſay*, 57. 18. *I was angry with him for his evil luſtings, and he went on in the frowardneſs of his own heart*, ther is no help if the Diſeaſe grow worſe for the dreſſing, the Prophet adds, *I have ſeen his waies, I will heal him, and lead him, and reſtore comforts to him, and to thoſe that mourn with him*; as if he ſhould ſay, Ah poor Creature, he cannot ſee himſelf nor me, yet I ſee him, and his way, he wounds himſelf, but I will heal him; he deludes himſelf, but I will lead him; ſink he muſt in his own ſorrow, but I will ſuccor him, and ſupply to him, *Iſay*, 48. 4. *I know thou art obſtinate, and thy neck is an Iron ſinew, and thy brow is Braſs*; and yet verſe 17. *I am the Lord thy Redeemer that teach thee to profit, and leadeſt thee by the way thou ſhouldeſt go.* The Lord bows an Iron ſinew, and makes it bendable unto his will: The Lord makes ſnowy Saints of ſcarlet ſinners; Scarlet we know is twice dyed in the Wool, and in the Web and Cloth, and therefore it is beyond all the skil and art of man to alter it. Yet though our ſins be ſuch, bred in our Natures, committed in our Lives, and therefore beyond our reach and skil, and the power of all

all means and performances we can take up to remove them, yet the Lord hath undertaken it, and he will do it. *Isa.* 1. 18.

There is a Threefold Argument to settle this Truth.

Reas. 1. Taken from the largeness of his Mercy, which is as himself, Infinite; and therefore infinitely exceeds all our wants, and can supply them, all our weaknesses and infirmities, and therefore can forgive them, and remove them as he will, as though they had never been. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, for he will abundantly pardon, and to our God, for he will have mercy.* But the discouraged sinner might happily reply, It is Mercy that I have abused, and his pardons he hath tendered, yet I in the time of my folly have trampled under my feet, and therefore with what face could I beg mercy, or upon what ground could I think ever to receive it? He answers, *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your waies my waies; for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my thoughts than your thoughts*: there is no proportion, no comparison, the Earth is not of a valuable consideration to the Heavens, but like a Centre in the Circumference, it is as though it was not. So here, the thoughts of Gods Mercy to pardon thee, is so far beyond the evil of thy waies, and thoughts to condemn, that they are as though they were not: nay, though thou couldest not beleeve it, or think it, yet the Lord could and would do it. This is one of his names, *He keeps mercy for thousands*, Exod. 34. 7. he hath it in store for thousands, *and* FORGIVES *Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin*, that is, all kinds and degrees of sin; and he must be thus, or else he were not God: For did our sins exceed his mercies, our weakness his strength; were Satan more malicious to tempt us, and powerful to overcome us, than he was gracious to defend, and Almighty to

to deliver, then were he not God if any thing were impossible to him, or had power above him; And hence the Lord delights to set forth the praise of his Mercy, and therefore when sin is most vile, and hainous, and hellish, then doth he express his compassion in a most glorious manner; it's the glory of the Physitian when the Disease is most deadly, then to do the Cure, *Isa.* 43. 24,25. *You have wearied me with your iniquities, and made me to serve with your sins, behold I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my name sake*; q. d. None but a God of endless Mercy could do it, therefore behold it, acknowledg it, *I will blot out your iniquities, and remember your sins no more.* This is the dispute of the Apostle, *Rom.* 5. last, having said that our Justification, Reconciliation, and Life comes by Grace, he ads, why then serves the Law? he answers, That sin might abound, that sin might be encreased, and become more and more hainous, because against an express Law, but *where sin abounded, grace abounded much more*; the Lord gave (as it were) sin all advantages to do its utmost, and yet then Grace would abound so much the more in conquering and raigning over sin: And therefore it's certain, if all sins in the world (that against the Holy Ghost excepted) should meet in one Soul as Waters in the Sea, the Mercy of the Lord would abound much more, becau'e those sins did abound.

Reas. 2. The Merits of our Savior Christ are of an infinite satisfying vertue, and exceed the venom of the guilt of all sins, *Rom*, 5. 18. So *Paul* constantly disputes, *If by the offence of one sin entred unto condemnation, much more by the death and obedience of our Savior Righteousness entred unto eternal Life.* And therefore it was that our Savior was pleased to receive our Nature even from the vilest of sinners, that he might shew himself a Savior from all sins, *Matth.* 1. Hence also his blood is called *a fountain set open for* Judah *and* Israel, *to wash in, for sin, and for uncleanness*, Zach 13. 1. *i. e.* For all

all kind of ſinners, and all ſorts of ſins. So that were thy heart a Sink, a Sodom, a Hell of wickedneſs, if the water of this Fountain might paſs through and be applied, it would cleanſe all. For our Savior ſuffred the infinite wrath of his Father, which was due for our ſins, more he needed not, nay ſhould not, nay could not have ſuffered, if he died for a thouſand worlds of his Elect, if they had come from the Loyns of our firſt Parents. And I do beleeve there is vertue enough there to pardon the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt if it were applied, but becauſe it was committed againſt the work of the Spirit ſo directly, it is not juſt he ſhould, and there is no other that will; for the Spirit works from the Father to the Son, and therefore laſt of all, ſo that they both have put forth their works before, and if therefore his be wronged, he will not apply, and there is none elſe that can; if the Work of the Father be wronged, Chriſt may intercede; if he be blaſphemed, the Spirit may apply; but if he be deſpighted, there is none left that will or can.

Reaſ. 3. Becauſe the power of the Spirit is ſuch that he can conquer and overcome all, which with his own Honor he can attempt to remove (as all, but that which is committed immediately againſt his Operation) he wil and doth: this is the ground of overcoming which the Apoſtle gives, 1 *John*, 4. 4. *You have overcome the world, becauſe greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.* That alſo which *Paul* propounds for the cleanſing of the moſt loathſom puddles, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. *But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified in the Name of Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God*; for that Spirit is above all unclean Spirits, and therefore when he will come and work upon the ſoul, and cleanſe it from all its corruptions, Sin, and the World, and the Devil, and all give way, they cannot hinder his work.

So that if the Mercy of God be infinite, able to forgive all; the Merits of Chriſt of infinite Vertue, able to ſatisfie for all; and the Spirit of infinite power to conquer

quer all, then the worst of sinners may become broken hearted sinners, when the Lord will please to look upon them.

We have here matter of Admiration to see and stand amazed at the riches of Gods mercy and grace, which succors the most desperate sinners, relieves at the hardest streights, saves even from the nethermost Hell. It's the Collection the Prophet makes from the ground formerly mentioned, *Mich.* 7.18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardonest iniquity, and passest by the transgression of the remnant of thine heritage, because mercy pleaseth him.* He intends pardon to such who have nothing that can purchase it, do nothing that can deserve it; nay practice nothing which is in any manner pleasing, which might perswade him to it; yea when he is displeased with all things but his own mercy, and indeed can be pleased with nothing else, when they dishonor his Name, wrong his Justice, reject his Commands, and grieve his Spirit, every thing provoketh him, yet because his mercy pleaseth him, therefore he doth good against evil, therefore he overcomes all their evil in [illegible]ness. Yea, When sinners out of their impenitency, and malignant enmity of their Spirits, would destroy themselves and his mercy also, and cast away his compassions; his mercy is pleased to honor it self, and to save them, who is a God like this God? and what mercy like this mercy? He is not like the Idols of the Heathens, even themselvs being witnesses, for the followers & favorites of Idol Gods, who dote upon them in time of prosperity, and devote themselves to their Worship, yet in the day of distresse, their Idols leave them in the lirch, and they are forced to look to the Lord for relief. *Jer.* 2. 27. *In the time of their trouble they will say, Arise and save us.* But the hope of *Israel* is not like them, when the Disease is most deadly, he then cures, the condition of the sinner most desperate, he then delivers, out of the jaws of Satan and botom of Hell, he then rescues.

Use, 1.

Reader observe,

Its the Prerogative he takes to himself. *Thy destruction O Israel is of thy self, but in me is thy help.* Hos. 13. 9. It's that praise which the Saints give as the proper due of the Lord, *Psal.* 103. *Praise the Lord O my soul, who forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thy diseases*; and *Jonah* leaves this Cure upon Record after he was landed by the Whale, *Jonah* 2. 6. *Yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption O Lord my God*; and verse 9. *Salvation is of the Lord.*

Use 2. Here is a ground of Encouragement to sustain the hearts of such forlorn Creatures as are sunk down in desperate discouragement, as past help and hope; to provoke them yet to seek out for help and recovery, and to expect to receive it from the hand of the Lord. That Disease is not past Remedy which hath been cured: nor the Condition past hope that hath been recovered. As bad and vile as thou have been humbled and broken-hearted, and why not thou saved? Turn but thy thoughts aside, and attend the Text, and trust thine own eyes; behold, look here upon the most loathsom Hell-hounds that ever the Sun saw, or the Earth bore, listen and hear these hideous blasphemies, they belch out against the Son of God, they cried, *away with him, away with him*; *not him, but* Barrabas; they chuse a Murderer rather than a Savior: behold their butcherly hands imbrued in the blood of Jesus, some goaring his side, others nailing his feet, piercing his pure and holy hands; and that they might be bloody Creatures indeed, they do not only shed his blood, but they keep his blood upon Record for their Condemnation, say they, *His Blood be upon us, and upon our Seed.* That which they have done, and desired for their own ruine, is it not just but they should have it? dost not thou wonder that the Earth did not open and swallow them? that the Lord did not thunder from Heaven, and immediately destroy them? or that he sent not Legions of Devils to drag those wretches souls out of their Bodies

Matt. 27. 21.

v. 25.

to

to send them packing to the pit? And yet stay but a little, and see what God hath done, in the midst of all this hellish wickedness, look a little further; they who took away the life of Christ, he is now taking away their sins, and guilt from them; they crucified him, and he is now crucifying their cursed corruptions; they pierced his tender body to put an end to his daies, he is now piercing their souls with Godly sorrow to put an end to their sins and miseries. Come hither therefore all you poor desolate undone Creatures, *You whose sins are written with a pen of Iron, and graven with the point of a Diamond*; they stand upon record in every coast and corner; you stout-hearted rebellious sinners, the Seats of the Place where you sit, the Stones in the Street where you walk, the Walls of the Houses where you dwel, the Decks of the Ships where you have sailed, and the Shoars where you have Landed, and the Wildernesses where you have travelled, they can bear witness against you of the contempt of Gods Truth, the neglect of his Ordinances, unprofitableness under all, you slight all Counsels and Admonitions, you are amongst the number of them *that are laden with lusts, ever learning, but never coming to the knowledg of the Truth.* So that the floods of iniquity seem to compass and overwhelm, and might force you to sink down in irrevocable discouragement. I confess your condition is extreamly desolate and dangerous; yet it's possible, *it may be*; there is a peep-hole of hope it may be otherwise; and happy it is for you that there is yet a *may be* left, that God hath not sealed you up to condemnation, and turned the Tombstone upon you. Look up a little, thou art yet alive, Oh therefore lay about thee while yet opportunity and possibility lasteth. Say, Lord, these sinful wretches that opposed thy Grace, so long resisted thy Ordinances, thy Servants, yea, crucified the Lord of Life, and yet their hearts are now wounded for their sins; Oh break my heart also, humble my soul also.

Jer. 17. 1.

2 *Tim.* 3. 7.

Take Notice

Yea, but I cannot think it; truly I dare not, I cannot, I am ashamed to beg mercy who have so long abused it. Why mark what the Apostle saies, *Ephes.* 3. 20. *God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all thou canst think or ask.* All this while the presumptuous secure sinner, he stands by and hears all this, and he blesseth himself in his lazy course, contents himself with this possibility, and here takes up his stand, but neglects to do any thing that may attain it.

Oh is it not pitty to cast such Dainties before Dogs, and Pearls before Swine? Did I say, *it was possible?* True, I said so indeed; but it's pity thou wert in the hearing of it, it's pity to speak such precious encouragements to such poysonful and malignant spirits, that will pervert all to their own ruine. The word is past, and cannot be recalled, but take these Preservatives or Corrosives rather to eat out that impudent corruption.

1. Know, though it be possible, yet it is not possible to thee, nor any power thou hast, nor any means thou canst use, *Matth.* 19. 36. *With man this is impossible.*

2. Nay, know, That so long as thou continuest in that careless, presumptuous, self-confidence, it is not possible that God should save thee, *Heb.* 3. 18. He hath said it, and sworn it, that they who rest in their carnal confidence, they shall *never enter into his rest*: and God will not, nay, cannot deny himself, and his Oath.

3. As it's possible God may, so it's possible he may not break thy heart, and it's a great suspicion he will not, if thou so impudently abuse his Mercy, Patience, and long suffering, wherby he calls thee to repentance, and would melt thy rebellious heart, *Rom.* 2. 4. *Thou after the hardness of thy heart which cannot repent, treasurest up to thy self wrath against the day of wrath.* It's a shrewd suspicion if thou striv'st long against his Spirit, and slightest the season, he will cease to strive with thee and take away the season, *Luke*, 19. 42. *If thou hadst known*

known at least in this thy day the things belonging to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

It will cost much labor and long time, before it be done in an ordinary way: and therefore if thou art wise for thy soul omit no time, be faithful to do what thou canst, and yet fearful, because it's in Gods hand to do what He will. Therefore seek seasonably, tremblingly, and uncessantly unto the Lord to do this work for thee. It's not the dipping, but rubbing and soaking an old stayn that will fetch it out; thou must soak and steep thy soul with godly sorrow. It's not Salving, but long tenting an old sore that will do the Cure. It may be it will make you go crying to your grave, and well if you get to heaven so at last. 4.

This shews the hellish nature and the inconceivable haynousness of the sin of dispaire, which rusheth the sinner upon irrecoverable ruine, and would seem to overcome the mercy of God, wherein he overcomes himself, laies a mans present comforts and future hopes wast at once, beyond the reach of any relief or recovery, puts the soul beyond the sight and expectation of any succour and supply that might support it in the least measure. That look as when the Ship runs a ground, or splits upon a Rock neer shore, or within the sight of land, there is yet a possibility, that some help may come from the Coast to them, or they at least may be wafted to land, and so swim out; but when the Vessel is now carried into the main Ocean, that it should then founder in the waves, or be overwhelmed in the midst of the Sea, they are wholly without sight of land, or least hope of any relief, there is no eye to see them in their misery, and therefore none to pitty them, nor any hand to help them, or any means within the ken of Providence for them to conceive they might expect deliverance; So it is with this in Comparison of al other sins (the unpardonable one excepted) what ever other iniquities surprise the soul, what ever the nature, or number, or haynousness Use 3.

nesse be, hightened with all circumstances that may attend, as long as the soul can look out to the infinitnesse of Gods Mercy and free Grace, the invaluable efficacy and vertue of the Merits of the Lord Christ, his death and obedience, a man is within sight of Land, when the Ship is split he may swim to shore. *Look unto me all ye ends of the Earth, and be ye saved, saies the Lord, Isa.* 45. 22. there is yet hope in Israel touching this thing; for it is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, *That Christ came to save sinners, whereof I am chief*, saies *Paul*, 1 Tim. 1. 16. *And as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so are the thoughts of God above our thoughts*, Isa. 55. But this sin of despair sinks a mans heart and comforts as a stone flung into the midst of the Sea, carries a man beyond the ken and compass of the boundless favor and compassions of the Lord. To go no further than the Doctrine delivered, the malignity of this evil herein discovers it self, as that which brings the greatest dishonor to God, and irrecoverable danger to the soul.

1. It's deeply injurious and dishonorable to the Almighty, it sins against more of God, and tramples the riches of his Graces and tender Mercies under the feet of contempt, and counts the Covenant of life and Salvation in the Gospel, not only a common thing, but a vain thing; it flings Gods Truth and Faithfulnes, and his enlarged Favors into his face with scorn, as unable to help, and unworthy to be attended. And when all the glorious Attributes and Excellencies of God have met together in contriving and accomplishing the Salvation of a sinner, in despight of all the power of Hell and darkness; this dasheth and blurreth all with the highest disdain, and contumelious indignity that may be. There was an infinite power, wisdom, and goodnes put forth in making a World of nothing, adorned and enriched with such beauty and goodnes, which each man may see in the frame thereof: but in the plotting and performing the great

great Work of Redemption, there was wiſdom beyond all the wiſdom in the Work of the Creation; power beyond and above all that power; God ſaid, let there be a World, and it was ſo: but ſaying will not ſerve the turn here, it muſt be the ſending of his own Son, the death and ſuffering of Jeſus Chriſt, it muſt coſt him his life before loſt man could be reſtored to life again; here was Mercy above all the former Bounty and Goodneſs; that goodneſs then vouchſafed continued not with man, nor he in it; but this is everlaſting mercy, which doth not only put us into the poſſeſſion of Grace and Glory, but keeps us there in deſpight of all the power and policy of Devils, all the treachery and weakneſs of our own hearts; deſpair caſts the Crown of all his Power, and Wiſdom, Truth, and Faithfulneſs down unto the duſt, and proclaims to all the world, in our apprehenſion, our weakneſs is beyond his power, it cannot ſupport us, our folly too hard for his wiſdom, it cannot lead and enlighten our minds, our miſery and ſins ſurpaſſeth the vertue of his mercy, it cannot help and relieve us.

This is the reaſon why the Lord cannot endure the leaſt appearance of theſe deſperate pangs, as deeply injurious to the Honor of his Name, and that in the greateſt Excellency, *Iſa.* 40. 27. *Why ſaieſt thou O* Jacob, *and ſpeakeſt thou O Iſrael, my way is hid from the Lord, and my Judgment is paſſed over of my God?* Let no more ſuch words be heard, the Lord cannot endure to hear you ſpeak ſo, or to have you think ſo; you caſt the moſt vile unſufferable indignity upon the Lord that may be. You drooping diſcouraged hearts, you think it is the loathſomneſs of your own ſins, the vileneſs and unworthineſs of your own perſons that you look at in all thoſe dreadful complaints you make. Is there water enough in the Sea to cleanſe this ſink of helliſh rebellions in this wretched Nature? Can ſuch loathſom abominations of ſo deep a dye, of ſo long continuance, committed againſt ſo much Light, Grace, committed againſt knowledg

and Conscience, against patience and goodness, and that multiplied from day to day, Can these be pardoned? Mercy should be accessary to its own dishonor if it should shew mercy to such a wretch which hath so abused it. Know assuredly, you speak against the Lord al this while, while you would seem to speak against your own wretched distempers; so the Psalmist *Psal.* 78. 19. *Yea* (they not only sinned more, and provoked God, as in the former verses, but) *they spake against God, saying, Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderness?* You blaspheme and speak against his Power, which is not able to work it; against his Wisdom, which cannot contrive it; against his Mercy, which is not willing, or not able to succor you: It was the greatest sin that ever *Cain* committed, when he said *his sin was greater than could be forgiven*, Gen. 4. Then thy heart is more sinful than God can be merciful, Satan more able to damn thee than God is able to save thee; then God is no God, and Christ is no Christ, and the Spirit no Comforter; yea, this is to make the Devil, which is the worst of all Creatures, and Sin which is no Creature, but weakness, and worse than the Devil himself, to be above God, and the Lord Jesus, and the blessed Spirit of Grace; worse than which blasphemy, Hell it self can hardly afford any. Hear therefore and fear, and for ever abhor that such thoughts should once come into your minds, such words proceed out of your mouths.

2. As it's dishonorable to God, so it's dangerous, yea, deadly to the soul: It not only crosseth a mans present comfort, darkens our evidence, sence, and assurance of Gods Favor; but utterly cuts off all possibility from the soul for ever expecting the least drop of refreshing, or smile of Gods Face. For hope in the Heart is the last sprong or sucker in the root of the Tree, whereby it lives and stands. Though the soul see nothing, feel nothing, have nothing, yet Hope saies *it may be* [otherwise, this proud heart may be abased, this sturdy heart may be forced

forced to stoop, this unbeleeving heart though it hath had, and abused, and slighted, and been unprofitable under so many means, and after so many prayers, promises, resolutions, continues still, yet *it may be* otherwise saies Hope; this holds up the head from sinking, the heart from failing: But despair takes away this, you have tried, used the means, expected help, but you see it comes to nothing, nay, there is no hope it will ever be, set your heart at rest, it will never be. This stops all the passages, that there is no hope for any good or comfort to accrue to the soul. This is the Instrument of death, whereby the Enemy at once makes an end of the very life of our comfort: The hope of Salvation is made the Helmet of a Christian; so the Apostle, 1 *Thes.* 5. 8. *Put on the Breast-plate of Faith and Love, and for an Helmet, the Hope of Salvation.* Well-grounded evidence and assurance of Gods Love in Christ, is as it were the head, and the highest top of a Christians comfort, hope is the Helmet; for when our sence and feeling, experiences and performances, yea our hearts fail, in regard of any present sweet, or refreshing we have, yet hope saies, it may be it will be better hereafter, and this holds the aking head of a Christian: The Devil who ever fights at the head, labors to shake our assurance and comfort, and if he can dash a mans hopes by despair, he kils him dead in the head, there is no help nor recovery to be looked for; know this, and be wary and wise for after times. 1.

2. As it dams up the way, and stops the passage, that there is no possibility of any good to come, so it deads all a mans endeavors, takes off the edg of a mans abilities, puts all out of joynt and off the hooks, that there is no striving after a good when there is no hope to attain it. All men that are carried by counsel (if not fools or mad-men) they ever have an end in their eye, at which they look, and for which they labor; this is the white they shoot at, the price they run for, for this they devise 2.

and contrive means, and uſe what they have attained, improve what they take in hand, in hope the end they have attended, may be brought about. Now where there is no hope (which deſpair caſts off) there is no good to be expected, therefore no poſſibility to attain our end, therefore no reaſon to attend our labor in that behalf. Why ſhould I ſeek (ſaies the deſpairing man) when I have no hope to find? Why ſhould I ſpend my labor in praying, hearing, reading, improving any Ordinance, when there is no poſſibility I ſhould ſpeed, that ever God ſhould help, or hear, or bleſs? as good ſit ſtill, as riſe and fall. So *Cain* when he had laid that deſperate concluſion, *My ſin is greater than can be forgiven, he flies into the Land of* Nod, drowns himſelf in ſenſual delights, but forſakes the Lord. The Hope of Good is the Load-ſtone of a mans labor, it carries on our courſe with ſpeed and reſolution: So they in *Jonah*, 3.9. *Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we periſh not?* Therefore do theſe two things:

1. Let not Satan make concluſions from our weakneſſes, nor do thou liſten to them, nor beleeve them if he ſhould make them. We ſhould be wary not to ſuffer our ſelves to be deluded by his falſe collections. Thy Conſcience ſaies thy corruptions are ſtrong and many, and of long continuance; therefore there is no hopes ſaies Satan; Temptations are violent and ſubtil ſaies thy experience, thou feeleſt them ſo, therefore there is no expectation of relief or abatement, ſaies Satan; the inference is unreaſonable, and groſly falſe, the ſins of *Manaſſah*, *Paul*; theſe Converts in the Text were ſuch, and yet ſuch received the work of Grace and Mercy alſo, therefore liſten not to him who is the father of lyes.

2. Look not to the power of means we do enjoy, the abilities we have, the performances we take up, for we ſhall find them all broken ſtaves, and bruiſed reeds, they will not only break under us, but pierce us through; they

they will fail us and our hearts alſo, there is no ſufficiency for our ſuccors, and therefore no ſound ground of Hope. But we ſhould keep our eye conſtantly and continually upon the ſufficiency of Gods ſaving health, and incomprehenſible power, *Who is able to do abundantly above all that we can ask or think*, Eph. 3. 20.

Do you not ſee ſaies the Enemy, the means do not work, your prayers do not profit, the abilities you have, and the endeavors you take up, ſerve rather to encreaſe your ſin than to help you, they nor you are able to ſubdue the leaſt ſin, to gain the leaſt aſſurance, not able to procure the leaſt peace: True, be it ſo, *Yet God is able.* Thus our Savior to his Diſciples diſmayed with the difficulty of the work, *Lord ſay they, who then can be ſaved?* he anſwers, *With man it is impoſſible, but not with God, for with God all things are poſſible*, Matth. 19. 26. It's not poſſible ſaies Satan, ſo many waies have been tryed, ſo many means uſed, and yet all is in vain; Ay but ſaies Chriſt, though with man and means it is impoſſible, yet with God it is poſſible. *Pſal.* 73. 26. My fleſh fails, and my heart fails, but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever. So much for that Point.

We are come now to enquire the Particulars expreſſed in the Deſcription, and here alſo preſented to our view. And firſt touching the ſight of ſin, whereby the ſinner is made rightly apprehenſive of his own corruption, and his condition by reaſon thereof. The Point thence is this:

Doct. *There muſt be a true ſight of ſin, before the heart can be truly broken for it.* A right apprehenſion goes before through Contrition; The Judgment muſt be rightly enlightened to ſee the nature of our ſins before the heart can be pierced with that ſence and ſorrow that is meet. This is Gods way which he takes, in whoſe hand it is only to do this work, *Job*, 36. 8. to 11. *When ſinners come to be bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affli-*

ction, then he ſheweth them their work, and their tranſgreſſions wherein they have exceeded; and then bows their ear to Diſcipline, and commands them to turn from iniquity. So repenting *Ephraim* profeſſeth it was the courſe the Lord took with him; *After I was inſtructed I repented*, Jer. 31. 19. That which the eye ſees not the heart rues not, that which is not apprehended by the underſtanding, is not affected by the will; ſo in 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. when the word comes home in power and plainneſs, ſo that *the thoughts of his heart come to be diſcovered*, he falls down, and ſaies, God is in you of a Truth. The want of this was the reaſon why the Woman of *Samaria* manifeſted ſuch ſawcy impudency, and peremptory boldneſs, in her conference with our Savior, though ſhe could not be ignorant that thoſe abominable looſe haunts of hers would call to Heaven for revenge; but when our Savior laid his hand upon the ſore, and let the light ſhine in her face, and points at the vileneſs of her practice, *Thou haſt had five Husbands, but he whom thou now haſt, is not thy Husband*; ſhe then becomes ſenſible of his ſoveraign wiſdom, and her own wretchedneſs, *John*, 4. 18, 19, 20. So it was with *Paul*, when the Lord met him going to *Damaſcus* perſecuting the Saints; he ſaw not the ſinfulneſs of his courſe, and therefore was ſenceleſs of it. *Saul, Saul* (ſaies Chriſt) *why perſecuteſt thou me?* Then he anſwers, *Who art thou Lord?* Jeſus ſaid, I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt, it is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks: when he underſtood the evil of his way, then he ſtood trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaying, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? *Acts*, 9. 5, 6. Before the Corinthians were made conſcious of their own careleſneſs, neither pitying the ſoul of the inceſtuous Corinthian, nor yet ſeeking to reform his ſin, they gloried over him, and prided themſelves in their own conceited excellency; but when the Apoſtle had diſcovered their miſcarriage and failings, what ſorrow and care did

did it work in them, and what ſerious endeavor to reform the guilty party. The Doctrine is true, we ſhall endeavor to make it plain, and therefore we ſhall open ſeveral particulars, the right conceiving whereof will be as a key to unlock the Treaſury of this Truth, that each man may take what will ſerve his turn.

Enquire therefore we will

By what means, and after what manner God works this ſight of Sin. 1.

How far the ſinner may be ſaid to be active in it. 2.

Wherein this true ſight and apprehenſion properly conſiſts, and ſo diſcovers it ſelf. 3.

The Reaſon of this Truth, and the Lords Order in this proceeding. 4.

And then we ſhall make Application of it.

By what means, or after what manner the Lord works this ſight of Sin. Quære 1.

To which I ſhall Anſwer in four Concluſions: Or the Anſwer unto which Inquiry, will be expreſſed in four Particulars.

The Righteous Law of God, as it is the Rule of our Lives, ſo it is the Diſcoverer of our Sins, and ſwervings therefrom; and by the light thereof, together with that little light of common Principles, of Piety and Love left upon our Conſciences, we come to have our corruption made known to us, *Rom.* 3. 20. *By the Law is the knowledg of ſin*; inſomuch that *Paul*, a learned Phariſee, one that profited in the Jews Religion more than his equals; he was yet at a loſs in diſcerning and judging of the turnings and diſtempers of his heart, before he takes the light and lamp of the Law. So himſelf profeſſeth, *Rom.* 7. 7. *I had not known that luſt had been a ſin*, thoſe firſt ſtirrings of the Body of death, and ſecret lingrings and inclinations to that which is croſs to the wil of God, though there be no conſent given to them, no delight taken in them, *but that the Law ſaid, thou ſhalt not luſt*, the Sentence of the Law ſet down his Judgment, *Concluſ.* 1.

ment, and therefore the Apoſtle *James* compares it to a *perfect* and curious *Looking-glaſs*, wherein each man may ſee the leaſt blemiſhes or motes, if he will preſent himſelf before it, *James* 1. 25. *But whoſo looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein*, will lay his mind, and heart, and life level to the Law of God, and hold his heart and apprehenſions to the righteous Judgment, and Sentence thereof, it will plainly diſcover the ſmalleſt imperfections, the leaſt ſtirrings of the moſt hidden diſtempers that ariſe; ſo *Rom.* 2. 14. the Heathens with the twi-light or Star-light of the remainders of *the Law written in their heart* paſt Sentence againſt themſelves, touching the ſinfulneſs of their courſe.

2. But this is not all, nor yet enough, to make us to attain a right ſight of our Sins, unleſs the Lord put a new Light into our minds, within, as we have the Light of the Law, and Counſel of God ſhining without unto us; otherwiſe the Law may be, and wil be a claſped Book, and a dead Letter; we ſhall ſee little in it, or receive little from it. So *Paul*, Rom. 7. 9. *I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandement came, ſin revived.* Without the Law, how could that be, ſince he was *an Hebrew of the Hebrews, of the Tribe of Benjamin, trained up at the feet of Gamaliel*? a Doctor of the Law, profeſſed it, and practiſed it, according to the moſt exact *Sect of the Phariſees*, as he ſpeaks? But the meaning is, that he was without the power of it, and the ſpiritual life, and lively efficacy of the Law. It was a dead and a killing Letter. Look what the ſence of the words, or ſome evidence of Reaſon or Arguments could hold out to a Natural Underſtanding; the bark, and ſhell, and outſide of ſuch directions, he took and entertained. But the Spiritualneſs of the Law, *For the Law is Spiritual*, ſaies *Paul*, and that ſpiritual and lively power of Conviction and Direction, it puts forth upon the ſouls of the Saints, who are ſubject to it, and there-

therefore indeed receive the work of it. This *Paul once* in the time of his unregeneracy was destitute of, and then *he was alive*; that is, in his own overweening, and self-deluded conceit, he concluded himself to be a living Christian, to have the power and truth of Grace, and to live the life of it. So that it's possible, nay it's ordinary, and nothing more usual, than for men to be without the Law, when they have the Law; to be without the Life of it, while they have the Letter of it; to be without the Law as a Soveraign Rule to their Lives, while they take upon them the profession of it; to be without the Spiritualness of the Law, and so to miss the end of it that is closing with God, as our last end, and chief good, which is the sap, the pith and substance of the Law, though they have the appearance of the practice of it, (And if they miss the end of the Law at which it aims, and unto which it tends, they must needs fall short of the Wisdom and Counsel, and Spiritual efficacy of the Law, which should direct them) So in 2 *Chron.* 19. 3. *Now for a long time, Israel had been without the true God*; that is, his true Worship that would bring them to him; and that is the meaning of that Phrase, *Ephes.* 2. 12. *Without God in the World*; that is, without the true Worship of God: so that they who want the true Worship of God, are without God. So they who have the manner of the true Worship, and want both Spirit and Truth, in which God will be worshiped, they have the Appearance, but want the Spirit and Truth of the true manner they have. So of the rest. Thus it is with thousands in the Church, which hear, and know, and have the Letter of the Law, and yet are indeed without the Power and Spirit; and therefore they neither see the evil of their sins by it, nor yet receive any spiritual Direction from it, nor indeed know any such thing; and therefore though their carriages are somwhat reformed, yet their inward corruptions are not observed,

obſerved, at leaſt not reformed, or they made ſenſible of them: As it is with a pur-blind man, he may ſee things of a greater bulk, as a great Print, or the like; but the ſmalleſt Print, or the leaſt pricks, he perceives not: So it is with a pur-blind Chriſtian *who cannot ſee afar off*, 2 *Pet.* 1.9. If there be ſome loathſom and groſs ſins diſcovered, he can ſee them; but to ſee the ſtirrings of ſin in his Nature, and the ſecret inclinations of his ſoul to ſin, and the baſe aims and ends that are up and down in his heart in the performance of holy Duties, to ſee the ſmalleſt Print of the Law diſcovering ſecret and ſpiritual wickedneſs in the Heart, that a man that hath no more than Nature cannot ſee. And therefore (for we come to the Point) the Spirit of Bondage is required which may let in the light of the Law into the mind, and ſet on the power of it mightily upon the conſciences of ſinners, and ſo dazle their Eyes, and daunt their hearts with the dreadfulneſs of their ſins, *Rom.* 8. 15. *You have not received the ſpirit of Bondage again to fear:* as who ſhould ſay, it's a gift, and it muſt be received, or elſe we ſhall not by all that we can do, attain the bondage and thraldom of that baſe condition in which we are (whereof more afterward in Conviction.) The Law is a Hammer, but it will not break the Flint unleſs the hand of the Spirit take it and uſe it; a Hammer in the hand of a Child will not move the ſtones; ſo the Law in the hand of a man or Miniſter, it is as a Rod to whip us unto Chriſt; but unleſs the Spirit take it into his hand, we ſhall never feel the blow or ſmart, and ſo be forced to go: Hence that Phraſe, *John*, 16. 8, 9. *I will ſend the Spirit, and he ſhall convince*, it's his Prerogative; he is appointed, by him it's only performed.

3. The two former may agree to a falſe-hearted Hypocrite, he may have a lighter ſtroke of the Spirit of Bondage, and the Law may convince him, and his own heart condemn him, and he may go away in dreadful horror for his ſins, and yet it doth not remove the Rule of Ignorance,

rance and darkneſs out of the mind, but the Saints of God have the two former and they have this further, viz. ſuch a through ſtroak of the ſpirit of bondage as takes away the rule of darkneſs and removes the Soveraignity and Authority of it from the mind this I take to be the meaning of that phraſe, *Acts.* 26. 18. *to turn them from darkneß to Light.* When the Lord wil work throughly, he wil not onely ſcatter the ſogs and diſperſe the groſſeſt of the dimneſs and darkneſs of a mans mind, and leave the ſoul under the power of it for all that. The hypocrite may be dazled and aſtoniſhed by the light of the truth breaking upon him, but yet his underſtanding is under the power of darkneſs, but the Saints of God are turned from it, that is their underſtandings are delivered from under the power of that darkneſs that was in them before. Conceive it thus, when the night comes darkneſs overſpreads the face of the Earth, and though there be Moon-light, or ſome flaſh of Lightning ſometimes, that may ſomething take off the groſſneſs and blackneſs of darkneſs but yet it is dark ſtil, the Moon-light or Starre-light doth not remove the rule of darkneſs: but when the Sun ariſeth in the Eaſt we ſay it is day break, and you ſhal ſee apparently when light comes with a Command of the Sun, it ſcatters the darkneſs that was in the ayr, it removes the rule of it, and it rules there it ſelf; So it is with the ſpirit of bondage, when he comes to an hypocrite he enlightens him with Star-light or Moon-light as it were, ſo that the groſſneſs of darkneſs and blindneſs is ſcattered, that now a terrified hypocrit ſees his ſins, and is able to Diſcourſe of ſin and of the Law of God and to Diſcover it to others, and yet it is but Moonſhine it makes not day, the root and rule of Darkneſs is there ſtil, which ſtops and hinders the entercourſe of the diſpenſations of God unto the ſoul. But now in a Godly man whoſe underſtanding is turned from darkneſs to light, when the truth and light of it hath by the ſpirit of bondage

been ſet on upon the mind and Conſcience, you ſhal ſee day breaking as it were, he then ſees himſelf and his ſin and he ſees God and Chriſt, as *the ſun of righteouſneß* ſhining gloriously in his Eyes dazling of him with ſuch a light as he never ſaw nor knew before, ſo in *Acts.* 9. the ſcales of ignorance and blindneſs fell from the Eyes of his mind and he was turned from the power of darkneſs, and that light which was ſet in to his underſtanding could never be overcome again by al the darkneſs in the world.

4 When the ſpirit of God hath ſet in this light of the law in the ſpecification of it, as it belongs unto the Saints, and ſo hath turned the underſtanding from darkneſs, he leaves a ſett upon the underſtanding Godward, that its ready, its that way-ward, to receive any truth that comes in the impreſſion of it; *and this is the turn of the underſtanding to light*, it was before turned from God, and ſett hell-ward, ſin-ward under the command of darkneſs and acted therby, wholly to beſtow it ſelf upon the creature in the room of God; As when Adam ſinned the whol man was turned from God to the creature and ſin, ſo now in Converſion, the whol man is turned from ſin and the creature to God again, and therfore the underſtanding *from darkneſs to light.* And Hence it is that a poor ignorant creature that hath come many years to the Congregation, and hath learned nothing he underſtands nothing, remembers nothing, or if out of the ſtrength of memory he remember ſomething yet he knows no more the thing than a Parrat. But when God hath once turned him, and left this ſett upon his underſtanding, and the day is broken as it were and the rule of darkneſs removed, & a new light ſet up there now he never comes but he takes ſomthing, he can underſtand it, and remember it, there is no ſubject but he will get ſomthing of it, becauſe his underſtanding is heaven-ward. I have known ſome by experience, that though they have been wiſe and wittie enough for outward

outward things, yet ſo ſenceleſs and ſottiſh in the things of God, that they could ſit and hear a Sermon of an hour long, of thoſe very ſins they have been guilty, and yet it hath been to them as though it had never been, yet afterward they have profeſſed it, that at ſuch a time, the light of the word broke in upon my ſoul, and after that I never heard the Miniſter preach but I received ſomthing, and my heart did cloſe with more than I could bear away, but I could underſtand then, and remember alſo, ever after that time, This is palpably true in caſes of Conſcience; I wil iſſue this point thus 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. *who hath called you out of darkneſs to his mervailous light*, the ſoul now begins to wonder and to be amazed, at the vileneſs of ſin, at the frame of his heart, at the patience of God that hath ſuffered him ſo long, and he marvails with himſelf where he hath been, and what he hath been doing all his dayes he is in another world (as it were) and if ever you have had this work of the ſpirit *calling and turning of you from darkneſs to light* it wil ſet you a wondering, you will ſee, ſin and your ſelf and grace and Chriſt and the Ordinances and all after another faſhion than ever you ſaw them before.

How far the ſinner may be ſaid to be active in this ſight of ſin.

The ſecond Partic. in explication of the Point.

The anſwer to this may be expreſſed in ſeverall particulars that that way of God and the work of his ſpirit may more diſtinctly be diſcovered.

1. There is a weakneſs, impotencie and inſufficiencie in the underſtanding to reach this right diſcovery of ſin, for however there remaynes ſo much glimmering in the twilight of Natural reaſon, and ſo much ſenſibleneſs in the ſtupid benummedneſs of the corrupt conſcience of a carnal man, that it can both ſee and ſenſibly check for ſome groſſer evil, or ſome ſuch ſins, or venom of ſin, as croſſeth his own peace and Comfort, or thoſe ends which he ſets up as the chiefeſt good at which he aymes

but to ſearch into the entrales of ſin, and diſcern the ſpiritual compoſition of the accurſed nature therof, he can in no wiſe attayn this by all the labor and light he hath, 2. *Pet.* 1. 9. *He that lacketh theſe things* (that is theſe heavenly graces whereof the chief were faith and heavenly knowledg mentioned before) *he is blind and cannot ſee afarr of*, he may (like a purblind-man) giveguels, or have a confuſed conceiving of things, after a dym and dazling faſhion, if the things be neer, as the man in the goſpel *ſaw men walking like Trees*, but there be ſecrets in ſin, depths in the diſtempers of mens hearts, which are far removed from outward appearance and ordinary apprehenſion, theſe he cannot perceive.

As it is in natural things and the ſeveral actions which iſſue from them, each man is able to hear the ſound of a mans words, to diſcern the ſence and reaſon of them, and wil eaſily grant from the received principles of reaſon that they come from a man, and evidence undeniably that there is a reaſonable ſoul there, which is and muſt needs be the cauſe thereof, becauſe they are properties that appertain to creatures of that kind alone, and argue a life of the higheſt excellency, nor Trees nor beaſts can do ſo, Its beyond their kind and the bounds of their ability; But what this reaſonable ſoul is in the conſtitution and compoſition therof, this is further removed from our ſence, and ſo from our apprehenſion, and it wil excerciſe the moſt ſharp and ableſt underſtanding, and that furniſhed with Learning and reading to apprehend or diſcover, ſo it is in ſin; when we hear the falſneſs of mens language, when they ſpeak thay care not how, to cover their own ſhame or deny that which might bring danger to them, when we ſee the cruelty and fierceneſs of their carriage in ſtealing or killing, each man out of ordinary principles will condemn thoſe, theſe be as it were the words and hands of ſin; Ah but the ſpirituall pride and ſoveraignty of wil

will, which lifts up it ſelf above the law and will of God juſtles his holineſs and holy command to the wall, this is the inward ſoul of ſin; thouſands which condemn the former have and harbour and maintayn theſe to their dying day; they never ſaw the evil of them. How the ſound of their actions ſtrik outwardly they hear and obſerve but how the wheels of their mind and wil go inwardly and ſwerve al the day long and all their lives long in the whol inward frame of the whol man, they be as far to ſeek as though there were no ſuch thing. The Conſcience checks and the worſt of men ſee the loathſomneſs of the evil, if he ſhould ſtab and take away the Life of a man, but every Blaſphemer ſtabs the Lord and yet his Conſcience doth not ſo check him there, becauſe he ſees the groſſneſs of the one its near but the ſpiritualneſs of the other he doth not ſee, it is a far off.

To ſtick in the medium and fall ſhort of the object is feebleneſs; That is the proper intendment of the Apoſtle when he layes open the feebleneſs of the wiſdom of the moſt Eminent heathen *Rom.* 1.21. *they knew God but did not glorify him as God but became vayn in their diſcourſe i. e.* they fell ſhort of their end, of God whom they pretended to worſhip, they miſſed of him; that was their vanitie, and they worſhipped the creature in the room of God. And hence the Prophet expreſſeth the practice of ſuch as thoſe who be wholly miſguided in their courſe by reaſon of their miſtakes *Iſay.* 5. 20. *They call evil good and good evil, they put darkneß for light and bitter for ſweet*, and therfore it is they are ſo eaſily couſened by Satan and do ſo eaſily couſen themſelves; And upon this ground it is, though they in *Acts.* 17. 23. *worſhipped an unknown God* and Paul would have taught them *the true God whom they ignorantly worſhipped*, they would follow their own fancies and worſhip Gods of their own making; but the true God bleſſed for ever they might have heard of him and been inſtructed concerning him, his being and

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Worſhip; they would not own nor entertain the Apoſtles Counſel in that behalf, nay, verſe 32. *they mocked him* when he ſpake to them of thoſe things.

2. There is an incapability in our minds to receive this ſpiritual light by which we might be enabled to come to the right diſcovery of our Corruptions, *John* 1. 5. *The Light ſhined in darkneſs and the darkneſs Comprehended it not.* This is the Condition of every man by Nature, So the Apoſtle, *ye were darkneſs*, *Eph.* 5. 8. Now one oppoſite will oppoſe and reſiſt another, but will not, nay cannot entertain another, and hence the Apoſtle gives that to be the ground of that reſiſtance againſt the truth 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. *They are men of corrupt minds, therefore they reſiſt the truth as Jannes & Jambres did.* As it is in Nature when any ſenſe hath loſt his right temper and wholſome Conſtitution, it is not poſſible to put forth its operation, with any right diſcerning or diſcovery of that which comes to it, the taſt is corrupt, the tongue tainted and over-grown with ſome Canker, it cannot taſt nor reliſh things aright, when the right conſtitution of the Eye is altered by a blow or any putrefying Wen that Breeds there, it will perceive nothing, nay it cannot; So here. When the Eye of the underſtanding hath loſt his primitive Conſtitution, and becomes ſtayned and polluted with putrefying ſenſual deluſions it comes to be *Reprobate* touching the Doctrin of faith, or that which ought to be beleeved, not able to reliſh the truth in a right manner; And this their practice gives evidence of beyond all doubt, the revelation of the truth, which is in way of diſcovery of corruption, and that which would touch them to the quick, they are not able nor willing in truth without offence to hear. But the power of it to be preſſed and perſued they are not able to bear, but there is preſent mutiny in their thoughts and apprehenſions, I ſay, not able to hear with quietneſs the truths which be of a diſcovering Nature; when our Saviour told them there muſt be more than an outward formal

formal Communicating with him, as the *Fathers did eat Manna and are dead*, but *they that would live by him muſt eat his fleſh and drink his Blood*, they returned, *this is a hard ſaying, who can bear it?* John 6. 60. and John, 3. 20. *He that doth evil cometh not to the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved*; yea, this is the reaſon they *love darkneſs rather than light*, becauſe it ſuits beſt with the darkneſs of their minds; and as the very manifeſtation is tedious to hear, ſo the power of it, if preſſed and ſet on, they are not able to bear; that's the ſcope of the Parable, *Matth.* 21. 34. when the Meſſengers were ſent to require fruit, that is, Holineſs, they beat ſome, and ſtoned others, and others they abuſed, *Acts* 7. 51. when *Stephen* brought the Candle home to their Bed-ſide, and would diſcover the roots of their corrupt carriages to the Conſciences of them all, *Ye ſtiff-necked and hard-hearted, ye have ever reſiſted the ſpirit of the Lord*; their hearts burſt with anger, they caſt him out and ſtoned him. And indeed hither the Apoſtle calls us to look as to the Magazine of all miſchief, the Armory and Ammunition Houſe, whence all the diſtempers and affections of the heart are furniſhed out to their ſinful practices, as ſo many enterprizes they take in hand, *Eph.* 4. 18. they are *ſtrangers to the life of God*, it is becauſe they *walk in the vanity of their minds*. So again in *Coloſ.* 1. 21. *They were alienated from God*, and bent upon evil practices; and he ads the root and reaſon of all, *they were Enemies to God in their minds*, in their apprehenſions, or the largeſt reach of the beſt reaſon they had: and in this the Apoſtle makes the Fort-royal in which Satan places and plants all the choyceſt of his Artillery, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. there are in the mind of a Natural man, *ſtrong holds of imaginations, which exalt themſelves againſt the knowledg of God.*

The Lord Chriſt forceth the underſtanding to bear that Almighty ſtroak of his Spirit, whereby he deſtroies the ſoveraign power of carnal reaſon, and fits it to receive 3.

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the prevailing impreſſion of his ſpiritual light, which ſearcheth the ſecrets of ſin in the ſoul. The Concluſion intimates a double work of the Spirit. 1. It deſtroies the ſoveraignty of carnal Reaſon. 2. It leaves in the room of that an impreſſion of ſpiritual light; and in both theſe the underſtanding is meerly paſſive, for ſo it's added, it's forced to bear the one, it's fitted to receive the other.

1. It deſtroyes the over ſwaying Authority of Carnal Reaſon; It was Satans Policy to turn the Underſtanding from the Lord, and attendance to the truth; *Gen.* 3. *Hath God ſaid ye ſhall not eat?* Oh queſtion it not, fear it not; *Ye ſhall be as Gods*; and ſo ſhe turning aſide, and perverting the eye of reaſon to liſten to the deluſion ſuggeſted, her light was dimmed, and ſhe juſtly over-born with the force of the falſhood preſented, becauſe ſhe took off her mind from eyeing of the command, and turned it to attend the ſtrength of that deluſion, and was ſo acted by it, ſhe conceived, though falſly, that it was good to get knowledg, when the taſting that fruit was the only means to loſe all the knowledg ſhe had; and from the abuſe of her own mutability, her mind becomes perverted from light to darkneſs, from the way of truth which God had found out, unto the by-path found out of her own finding. Now the Lord Chriſt who comes to *deſtroy and undo the works of the Devil*, he begins where Satan ended, *he turns from darkneſs*, he takes down the Supremacy of that carnal Reaſon, by the which all the Sons of *Adam* in their natural and corrupt condition are conſtantly both ruled and carried in their whol courſe; and that's the Reaſon of the Apoſtles coupling thoſe two together, *Eph.* 2. 3. ſpeaking of the Converſation of the ungodly, he ſaies, *they did the wils of the fleſh, and of their Diſcourſes*; their carnal reaſonings had ever one Oar in the Boat; and it's ever found true, there is no man upon knowledg commits a ſin, but ever he hath ſome pretence of carnal ſelf-deceiving reaſon

ſon why he doth ſo, and therefore it is called the ſtrong hold of Satan, and the Lord Chriſt, he firſt forceth this Fort, demoliſheth and caſteth down the frame of it; ſo that though there be ſome remainders continue ſtill in the mind, while that remains in the body, and we in the world, yet it's never made a place of retreat to a true Convert, wherein he can fortifie himſelf, and ſtand it out againſt any Truth; 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. he puls down ſtrong holds, ſuch as are higheſt and hardeſt to win; and that which is added, *Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts it ſelf againſt God,* λογισμους. Reaſonings of the fleſh; and nothing but the Power of God can do this, the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God. For though *Adam* being in a mutable condition, might ſlide away from the Government of God as well as ſubmit, yet after he had withdrawn himſelf from under the Covenant and Wiſdom of God in the Law given him, it was juſt with God to deliver him up to the authority of his inventions, and there to ſtake him down, that nothing but the Soveraignty of Chriſt who had ſatisfied for this his folly and carnal reaſoning ſhould be able to reſtore him from the power of them. This makes me conſtrue the meaning of thoſe words of *Paul* ſo, as that which beſt gives in evidence of the dependance, *Eph.* 4. 21, 22. *If ye have heard, and been taught, as the Truth is in Jeſus, then put off the old man, &c.* The Truth as it is in the Bible only, or diſpenſed in any Ordinance, or as it was in the Covenant of the Firſt *Adam*, will never do it; but as it is in the hand of Jeſus, the Head of the Second Covenant when he comes to beget a holy ſeed, and call home his Sons to himſelf, he will then make the old man fall. And this the Lord Jeſus forceth the Underſtanding to ſubmit unto, and this is eaſily yielded on all hands; for it's commonly confeſſed by Phyloſophers and Divines that there is a conſtraining force in the undeniable evidence of Argument ſet on by the Spirit, that the Judgment is neceſ-

sitated to fall under, and yet hereby no liberty is prejudiced, for that is in the will. Thus *Pauls* Commission runs, *Acts*, 26.18. *To open their Eyes, to turn them from darkneß to light, from the power of Satan to God.* What is the opening of the eyes distinct from that which follows? it may be it's that common enlightening in the History, Matter, and Truth of the Scripture wherein the understanding must in reason be informed, and themselves also yield a full assent, and so far be perswaded of the Truth and Goodness of the Doctrine of the Gospel; for it's oppolite to all the Rules of Reason and Providence, that persons should step from prophaness in the depth of it, unto the height of Christian Piety and Holiness, but there must be a passing through the common Truths that are in the way and rode to come to that end. First, a man must know there was a Christ, and who he was, and what he did, and wherein that Redemption of his is recorded in the Scriptures, and of what value and infallibility they be. Then we come to see our former follies and delusions in wch we were drown'd, and so to be turned from darkness, that we cast away the former forgeries of our carnal reasonings; where note, that *Paul turns them*, not they themselves, that it's *from darkneß*, they were nothing but darkness, and darkness could not, nor would not turn from it self, therefore from a more Soveraign light in Christ that darkness must be removed. In all which the soul behaves it self meerly passively, and is wrought upon, and that by an over-ruling power.

2. The second Operation mentioned, follows without fail, and by force of constraining Reason; the Soveraignty of darkness being removed, there is room made for the ready entertainment of light, of the guidance of the Spirit of Christ, as the Head of the Covenant, who begins to set up his Throne, where Satan had his hold; and this is like the Sun-rising, whose beams spread themselves from one end of the Heavens to the other, and no-

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thing is hid from the light thereof. So there is not the moſt ſecret corner or crevis of our corrupt hearts and conſciences, but the beauty and ſhine of the beams of this light will diſcover it; and this ſeems to me to be called *the Spirit of the Mind*, as that which beſt ſuits with the intendment of the Spirit in the place; for it is the meer impreſſion of the Spirit falling upon the Mind now turned from darkneſs, *Eph.* 4. 23. where the Apoſtle deſcribing the two parts of Sanctification; Mortification, verſe 22. *Put off the old man*, in reaſon it ſhould have followed immediately, *and put on the new man*, he inſerts this by the way, *and be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind*, in the paſſive form; and then, *put on the new man*, q d. This renewing is another work, and is to be referred to another place, and it anſwers none ſo fitly and fully as this place; and the word alſo ſuits it beyond imagination, ἀνανεοῦσθαι, a compariſon taken from Earth turned a new and another way: So ſhould the act of the underſtanding be turned afreſh, and lie conſtantly under the light and guidance of the Spirit; and here we are paſſive meerly. That which is meerly the act and impreſſion of the Spirit to the entertainment of the mind, is meerly paſſive; but this is the meer act and impreſſion of the Spirit, as the beams of the Sun diſperſing themſelves into the Air. Again, that which is wholly darkneſs, that cannot be active or cauſal of any Spiritual light; but the mind naturally is meer darkneſs, *Eph.* 5. 8.

This light ſo received the vnderſtanding being overpowred with it and acted by it acts alſo in the vertue thereof, and ſo the ſinner may be ſayd truly to ſee and underſtand, for he doth ſo, but in a right order and after a right manner conceived. In a right order, for (as before) of himſelf he had an Impotency unto this yea an incapability of this ſpiritual light, before he was forced from the holds of his carnal reaſon and made fit to receive it. In a right manner: The vnderſtanding being acted 4.

and moved by the power of this light doth move again so that the action Issues not so much from any habitual principle of grace, whereof a man hath the free use and command at his own pleasure, and so doth act or not act by it as he will: for so experience tells us it is not, The sinner at first would not see his sinnes were it in his power and might he have his own mind, he would have the ghastly visage of them gone out of his sight. Nay he useth al the wayes and contrives all the means he can, that he might put them out of his thoughts, that they might not come into his consideration or remembrance, It's against the heart and hair, utterly against his will, that he cannot get off it; which argues that he acts not so much here, as a cause by Counsel, out of his own choyce and habitual disposition whereof he hath the command, but meerly as he is acted; and after when the spirit withdraws, he cannot so see them though he would, as that phrase *Gal.* 4.9. *After ye have known God or rather are known of God.* It's not so much from our own ability we have from within that we do it, but because he looked upon us we look back again upon him. As a looking Glass reflects the light not from any light it hath of it's own, but because the light of the Sun fals upon it, so that it's true to say, *the light is reflected by it* rather than *it reflects the light.* For because the light do.h reflect therefore is comes to be reflected. So *Job* Complayned. *Job.* 13.26. *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my Youth:* So *David*, Psal. 77.4. *Thou keepest mine eyes waking.*

The third Particular in opening the Point.

Wherein this true sight, and apprehension of sin properly discovers it self.

I Answer, A true sight of sin hath two Conditions attending upon it; or it appears in two things: We must see sin, 1. Cleerly. 2. Convictingly, what it is in it self, and what it is to us, not in the appearance and

and paint of it, but in the power of it; not to fadam it in the notion and conceit only, but to see it with Application.

We must see it cleerly in its own Nature, its Native color and proper hue: It's not every slight conceit, not every general and cursorie, confused thought or careless consideration that will serve the turn, or do the work here, we are all sinners; it is my infirmity, I cannot help it; my weakness, I cannot be rid of it; no man lives without faults and follies, the best have their failings, *In many things we offend all.* But alas all this wind shakes no Corn, it costs more to see sin aright than a few words of course; It's one thing to say sin is thus and thus, another thing to see it to be such; we must look wishly and steddily upon our distempers, look sin in the face, and discern it to the full; the want whereof is the cause of our mistaking our estates, and not redressing of our hearts and waies, *Gal.* 6. 4. *Let a man prove his own work.* Before the Goldsmith can sever and see the Dross asunder from the Gold, he must search the very bowels of the Mettal, and try it by touch, by tast, by hammer, and by fire; and then he will be able to speak by proof what it is; So here. We perceive sin in the crowd and by hearsay, when we attend some common and customary expressions taken up by persons in their common converse, and so report what others speak, and yet never knew the Truth, what either others or we say, but we do not single out our corruptions and survey the loathsomness of them, as they come naked in their own Natures; this we ought to do: There is great odds betwixt the knowledg of a Traveller, that in his own person hath taken a view of many Coasts, past through many Countries, and hath there taken up his abode some time, and by Experience hath been an Eye-witness of the extream cold, and scorching heats, hath surveyed the glory and beauty of the one, the barrenness and meanness of the other; he hath been in the Wars, and seen

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seen the ruin and desolation wrought there; and another that sits by his fire side, and happily reads the story of these in a Book, or views the proportion of these in a Map, the ods is great, and the difference of their knowledg more than a little: the one saw the Country really, the other only in the story; the one hath seen the very place, the other only in the paint of the Map drawn. The like difference is there in the right discerning of sin; the one hath surveyed the compass of his whol course, searched the frame of his own heart, and examined the windings and turnings of his own wayes, he hath seen what sin is, and what it hath done, how it hath made havock of his peace and comfort, ruinated and laid waste the very Principles of Reason and Nature, and Morality, and made him a terror to himself, when he hath looked over the loathsom abominations that lie in his bosom, that he is afraid to approach the presence of the Lord to bewail his sins, and to crave pardon, lest he should be confounded for them, while he is but confessing of them; afraid and ashamed lest any man living should know but the least part of that which he knows by himself, and could count it happy that himself was not, that the remembrance of those hideous evils of his might be no more; Another happily hears the like preached or repeated, reads them writ or recorded in some Authors, and is able to remember and relate them. The ods is marvelous great. The one sees the History of sin, the other the Nature of it; the one knows the relation of sin as it is mapped out, and recorded; the other the poyson, as by experience he hath found and proved it. It's one thing to see a disease in the Book, or in a mans body, another thing to find and feel it in a mans self. There is the report of it, here the malignity and venom of it.

Quest. But how shall we see cleerly the Nature of sin in his naked hue?

Answ. 1. This will be discovered, and may be conceived in the Particulars following. Look we at it: First, As it respects

ſpects God. Secondly, As it concerns our ſelves. As it hath reference to God, the vileneſs of the nature of ſin may thus appear.

It would diſpoſſeſs God of that abſolute Supremacy which is indeed his Prerogative Royal, and doth in a peculiar manner appertayn to him, as the Diamond of his Crown, and Diadem of his Deity, ſo the Apoſtle, *He is God over all bleſſed for ever*, Rom. 9. 5. All from him and all for him, he is the abſolute firſt being, the abſolute laſt end, and herein is the crown of his Glory. All thoſe attributes of Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Holineſs, Power, Juſtice, Mercy, the ſhine and Concurrency of all theſe meeting together is to ſet out the unconceivable excellency of his Glorious name, which exceeds all praiſe, *Thyne is the kingdom, the power and the glory*, the right of all and ſo the rule of all and the Glory of all belongs to him. 1.

Now herein lyes the unconceavable hainouſneſs of the helliſh nature of ſin, it would juſtle the Almighty out of the Throne of his Glorious Soveraignty, and indeed be above him. For the will of man being the chiefeſt of all his workmanſhip, all for his body, the body of the ſoul, the mind to attend upon the will, the will to attend upon God, and to make choyce of him, and his wil, that is next to him, and he onely above that: and that ſhould have been his Throne and Temple or Chair of State, in which he would have Set his Soveraignty for ever. He did in an Eſpecial manner intend to meet with man, and to communicate himſelf to man in his righteous Law, as the rule of his Holy and righteous will, by which the will of *Adam* ſhould have been ruled and guided to him, and made happie in him; and all Creatures ſhould have ſerved God in man, and been happy by or through him, ſerving of God being happy in him; But when the will went from under the government of his rule, by ſin, *it would be above God, and be happy without him*, for the rule of

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the law in each command of it, holds forth a threefold expression of Soveraignty from the Lord, and therein the Soveraignty of all the rest of his Attributes.

1. The Powerful Supremacy of his just will, as that he hath right to dispose of all and authority to command all at his pleasure; *What if God will? Rom.* 9. 22 *My Counsel shall stand and I wil do all my pleasure, Isa.* 46. 10. And as its true of what shal be done upon us, so his wil hath Soveraignty of Command in what should be done by us we are to say *the will of the Lord be done; Davids* warrant was *to do all Gods wils Acts.* 13. 22. and our Saviour himself professeth, *John.* 6. 38. *that he came not to do his own will but the will of him that sent him*, and therfore his wrath and jealousie and judgment will break out in case that be disobeyed.

2. There is also a fulness of wisdom in the law of God revealed to guide & direct us in the way we should walk, *Psal.* 19. 7. *the law of God makes wise the simple*, 2. *Tim.* 3. 15. *it's able to make us wise unto Salvation.*

3 There's a Sufficiency of God to content and satisfy us. *Blessed are they who walk in his wayes, and blessed are they that keep his Testimonies. Psal.* 119. 1. 2. *Great prosperity have they that love the law, and nothing shal offend them*, ver. 16. and in truth there can be no greater reward for doing wel, than to be enabled to do well, he that hath attayned his last end he cannot go further, he cannot be better;

Now by sin we justle the law out of its place, and the Lord out of his Glorious Soveraignty, pluck the Crown from his head, and the Seepter out of his hand, and we say and profess by our practice, there is not authority and power there to govern, nor wisdom to guide, nor good to content me, but I wil be swayed by mine own wil and led by mine own deluded reason and satisfied with my own lusts. This is the guise of every graceless

graceleſs heart in the commiſſion of ſin ; ſo *Pharaoh who is the Lord ? I know not the Lord, nor will I lett Iſrael go.* *Exod.* 5. 2. in the time of their proſperity ſee how the Jews turn their backs and ſhake off the authority of the Lord, *we are Lords* (ſay they) *we will come no more at thee. Jer.* 2. 31. *and our tongues are our own who ſhal be Lords over us ? Pſal.* 12. 4. So for the wiſdom of the world, ſee how they ſet light by it as not worth the looking after it *Jer.* 18. 12. *we wil walk after our own devices & we wil every one do the imagination of his own evil heart, yea they ſett up their own traditions*, their own Idols and deluſions, and Lord it over the law, *making the command of God of none effect Math.* 15. 8. 9. So for the goodneſs of the word ; *Job.* 22. 17. *Mal.* 3. 14. *It is in vayn to ſerve God and what profit is there that we have kept his ordinances, yea his Commandemnts are ever grievous*, Its a grievous thing to the looſe perſon he cannot have his pleaſures but he muſt have his guilt and gall with them; Its grievous to the worlding that he cannot lay hold on the world by unjuſt means, but Conſcience layes hold upon him as breaking the law. Thou that knoweſt and keepeſt thy pride and ſtubbornneſs and thy diſtempers, know aſſuredly thou doſt juſtle God out of the Throne of his glorious Soveraignty and thou doſt profeſs, Not Gods wil but thine own (which is above his) ſhall rule thee, thy carnal reaſon and the folly of thy mind, is above the wiſdome of the Lord and that ſhal guide thee ; to pleaſe thine own ſtubborn crooked pervers ſpirit, is a greater good than to pleaſe God and enjoy happines, for this more Contents, thee ; That when thou conſidereſt but thy Courſe, doſt thou not wonder that the great and Terrible God doth not paſh ſuch a poor inſolent worm to pouder, and ſend thee packing to the pitt every moment.

2 It ſmites at the Eſſence of the Almighty and the deſire of the ſinner, is not only that God ſhould not be

ſupream but that indeed he ſhould *not be at all*, and therefore it would deſtroy the being of Jehovah. *Pſal.* 81. 15. ſinners are called *the haters of the Lord.* John. 15. 24. *they hated both me and my Father.* Now he that hates endeavours if it be poſſible the annihilation of the thing hated, and its moſt certain were it in their power, they would pluck God out of Heaven the light of his truth out of their Conſciences, and the law out of the Societies and Aſſemblies where they live, that they might have elbow room to live as they liſt. Nay what ever they hate moſt and intend, and plott more evil againſt in al the world, they hate God moſt of all, and intend more evil againſt him than againſt all their Enemies beſides, becauſe they hate all for his ſake, therefore wicked men *are ſaid to deſtroy the law Pſal.* 126. 119 the Adulterer loaths that law that condemns, uncleaneſs; the Earthworm would deſtrow that law that forbids Covetouſneſs, they are ſayd to *hate the light* John 3. 21. to hate the Saints and Servants of the Lord John 15. 18. *the world hates you*, he that hates the Lanthorn for the lights ſake, he hates the light much more, he that hates the faithful becauſe of the Image of God, and the Grace that appears there, he hates the God of all, Grace and Holineſs, moſt of all, ſo God to *Zenacharib*, Iſa. 37. 28. *I know thy going out and thy Comming in, and thy rage againſt me*, Oh it would be their content, if there was no God in the world to govern them, no law to curbe them, no juſtice to puniſh, no truth to trouble them, Learn therfore to ſee how far your rebellions reach, It is not arguments you gainſay, not the Counſel of a Miniſter you reject, the command of a Magiſtrate ye oppoſe, evidence of rule or reaſon ye reſiſt; but be it known to you, you fly in the very face of the Almighty, and it is not the Goſpel of Grace ye would have deſtroyed, but the ſpirit of Grace, the author of Grace the Lord Jeſus, the God of all Grace that ye hate,

It

It croſſeth the whol courſe of Providence, perverts the work of the Creature and defaceth the beautiful frame, and that ſweet correſpondence and orderly uſefulneſs the Lord firſt implanted in the order of things; The Heavens deny their influence, the Earth her ſtrength, the Corn her nouriſhment, thank ſin for that. Weeds come inſtead of herbs, Cockle and Darnel inſtead of Wheat, thank ſin for that, *Rom.* 8. 22. *The whol Creature* (or Creation) *grones under vanity*, either cannot do what it would or elſe miſſeth of that good and end it intended, breeds nothing but vanity, brings forth nothing but vexation, It crooks all things ſo as that none can ſtraiten them, makes ſo many wants that none can ſupply them, *Eccleſ.* 1. 15. This makes crooked Servants in a family no man can rule them, crooked inhabitants in towns, crooked members in Congregations, ther's no ordering nor joynting of them in that comly accord, and mutual ſubjection; know they ſaid, *the adverſary ſin hath done all this.* Man was the mean betwixt God and the Creature to convey all good with all the conſtancy of it, and therefore when Man breaks, Heaven and Earth breaks all aſunder, the Conduit being cracked and diſplaced there can be no conveyance from the Fountain. 3.

In regard of our ſelves, ſee we and conſider nakedly the nature of ſin, in Four particulars. 2.

Its that which makes a ſeparation between God and the ſoul, breaks that Union and Communion with God for which we were made, and in the enjoyment of which we ſhould be bleſſed and happie, *Iſai.* 59. 1. 2. *Gods ear is not heavy that it cannot hear nor his hand that it cannot help, but your iniquities have ſeparated betwixt God and you & your ſins have hid his face that he wil not hear for he profeſſeth,* Pſal. 5. 4. *that he is a God that wills not wickedneſs neither ſhal iniquity dwell with him. Into the new Jeruſalem ſhal no unclean thing enter, but without ſhal be doggs* Rev. 21. 1.

27. The Dogs to their Kennel, and Hogs to their Sty and Mire: but if an impenitent wretch ſhould come into Heaven, the Lord would go out of Heaven; *Iniquity ſhall not dwell with ſin.* That then that deprives me of my greateſt good for which I came into the world, and for which I live and labor in the world, and without which I had better never to have been born; nay, that which deprives me of an univerſal good, a good that hath all good in it, that muſt needs be an evil, but have all evil in it: but ſo doth ſin deprive me of God as the Object of my will, and that wills all good, and therefore it muſt bring in Truth all evil with it. Shame takes away my Honor, Poverty my Wealth, Perſecution my Peace, Priſon my Liberty, Death my Life, yet a man may ſtill be a happy man, loſe his Life, and live eternally: But ſin takes away my God, and with him all good goes; Proſperity without God will be my poyſon, Honor without him my bane; nay, the word without God hardens me, my endeavor without him profits nothing at all for my good. A Natural man hath no God in any thing, and therefore hath no good.

2. It brings an incapability in regard of my ſelf to receive good, and an impoſſibility in regard of God himſelf to work my ſpiritual good, while my ſin Continues, and I Continue impenitent in it. An incapability of a ſpiritual bleſſing, *Why trangreſs ye the Commandement of the Lord that ye cannot proſper do what* ye can, 2 Chron. 24. 20. And *He that being often reproved hardens his heart, ſhal be conſumed ſuddenly and there is no remedy*, He that ſpils the Phyſick that ſhould cure him, the meat that ſhould nouriſh him, there is no remedy but he muſt needs dye, ſo that the Commiſſion of ſin makes not only a ſeparation from God, but obſtinate reſiſtance and continuance in it, maintains an infinit and everlaſting diſtance between God and the ſoul: So that ſo long as the ſinful reſiſtance of thy ſoul continues; God cannot vouchſafe the Comforting and guiding preſence of his grace;

grace; becauſe it's croſs to the Covenant of Grace he hath made, which he will not deny, and his Oath which he will not alter. So that ſhould the Lord ſave thee and thy Corruption, carry thee and thy proud vnbeleeving heart to heaven he muſt nullify the Goſpel, (Heb. 5. 9. *He's the Author of Salvation to them that obey him*) and forſwear himſelf, (Heb. 3. 18. *He hath ſworn unbeleevers ſhall not enter into his reſt*) he muſt ceaſe to be juſt and holy, and ſo to be God. As *Saul* ſaid to *Jonathan* concerning *David*, 1 Sam. 20. 30, 31. *So long as the Son of* Jeſſe *lives, thou ſhalt not be eſtabliſhed, nor thy Kingdom*: So do thou plead againſt thy ſelf, and with thy own ſoul; So long as theſe rebellious diſtempers continue, Grace and Peace, and the Kingdom of Chriſt can never be eſtabliſhed in thy heart For this obſtinate reſiſtance differs nothing from the plagues of the ſtate of the damned, when they come to the higheſt meaſure, but that it is not yet total and final, there being ſome kind of abatement of the meaſure of it, and ſtoppage of the power of it. Imagine thou ſaweſt the Lord Jeſus coming in the clouds, and heardeſt the laſt trump blow, *Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgment*. Imagine thou ſaweſt the Judg of all the World ſitting upon the Throne, thouſands of Angels before him, and ten thouſands miniſtring unto him, the Sheep ſtanding on his right hand, and the Goats at the left: Suppoſe thou heardeſt that dreadful Sentence, and final Doom paſs from the Lord of Life (whoſe Word made Heaven and Earth, and will ſhake both) *Depart from me ye curſed*; How would thy heart ſhake and ſink, and die within thee in the thought thereof, were thou really perſwaded it was thy portion? Know, that by thy dayly continuance in ſin, thou doſt to the utmoſt of thy power execute that Sentence upon thy ſoul: It's thy life, thy labor, the deſire of thy heart, and thy dayly practice to depart away from the God of all Grace and Peace, and turn the Tomb-ſtone of everlaſting deſtruction upon

on thine own ſoul.

3. It's the Cauſe which brings all other evils of puniſhment into the World, and without this they are not evil, but ſo far as ſin is in them. The ſting of a trouble, the poyſon and malignity of a puniſhment and affliction, the evil of the evil of any judgment, it is the ſin that brings it, or attends it, *Jer.* 2. 19. *Thine own wickedneſs ſhall correct thee, and thy backſlidings ſhall reprove thee, know therefore that it is an evil, and bitter thing that thou haſt forſaken the Lord.* Jer. 4. 18. *Thy waies and doings have procured theſe things unto thee, therefore it is bitter, and reacheth unto the heart.* Take miſeries and croſſes without ſin, they are like to be without a ſting, the Serpent without poyſon, ye may take them, and make Medicines of them. So *Paul* 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. he plaies with death it ſelf, ſports with the Grave. *Oh death, where is thy ſting? Oh Grave where is thy Victory? the ſting of death is ſin.* All the harmful annoyance in ſorrows and puniſhments, further than either they come from ſin, or elſe tend to it, they are rather improvements of what we have than parting with any thing we do enjoy, we rather lay out our conveniences than ſeem to loſe them, yea, they encreaſe our Crown, and do not diminiſh our Comfort. *Bleſſed are ye when men revile you, and perſecute you, and ſpeak all manner of evil of you for my ſake, for great is your reward in Heaven*: Matth. 5. 11. There is a bleſſing in perſecutions and reproaches when they be not mingled with the deſerts of our ſins; yea, our momentary ſhort affliction for a good cauſe, and a good Conſcience, works an exceſſive exceeding weight of Glory. If then ſin brings all evils, and makes all evils indeed to us, then is it worſe than all thoſe evils.

It brings a Curſe upon all our Comforts, blaſts all our bleſſings, the beſt of all our endeavors, the uſe of all the choyceſt of all Gods Ordinances: it's ſo evil and vile, that it makes the uſe of all good things, and all the moſt

moſt glorious, both Ordinances and Improvements evil to us. *Hag.* 2. 13. 14. When the Queſtion was made to the Prieſt; *If one that is unclean by a dead Body touch any of the holy things, ſhall it be unclean? And he anſwered, Yea. So is this People, and ſo is this Nation before me, ſaith the Lord; and ſo is every work of their hands, and that which they offer is unclean*: If any good thing a wicked man had, or any action he did, might be good, or bring good to him, in reaſon it was the Services and Sacrifices wherein he did approach unto God, and perform Service to him, and yet *the Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 28. 9. and Tit. 1. 15. *To the pure all things are pure; but to the unbeleeving there is nothing pure, but their very Conſciences are defiled.* It is a deſperate Malignity in the temper of the Stomach, that ſhould turn our Meat and diet into Diſeaſes, the beſt Cordials and Preſervatives into Poyſons, ſo that what in reaſon is appointed to nouriſh a man ſhould kill him. Such is the venom and malignity of ſin, makes the uſe of the beſt things become evil, nay, the greateſt evil to us many times; *Pſal.* 109. 7. *Let his prayer be turned into ſin.* That which is appointed by God to be the choyceſt means to prevent ſin, is turned into ſin out of the corrupt diſtemper of theſe carnal hearts of ours.

Hence then it follows; *That ſin is the greateſt evil in the world, or indeed that can be.* For, That which ſeparates the ſoul from God, that which brings all evils of puniſhment, and makes all evils truly evil, and ſpoils all good things to us, that muſt needs be the greateſt evil, but this is the nature of ſin, as hath already appeared.

But that which I will mainly preſs, is, Sin is only oppoſite to God, and croſs as much as can be to that infinite goodneſs and holineſs which is in his bleſſed Majeſty; it's not the miſeries or diſtreſſes that men undergo, that the Lord diſtaſts them for, or eſtrangeth himſelf from them,

them, he is with *Joſeph* in the Priſon, with the three Children in the Furnace, with *Lazarus* when he lies among the Dogs, and gathers the Crums from the rich Mans Table, yea with *Job* upon the dung-hil, but he is not able to bear the preſence of ſin: yea, of this temper are his deareſt ſervants, the more of God is in them, the more oppoſite they are to ſin where ever they find it. It was that he commended in the Church of *Epheſus*, *That ſhe could not bear thoſe that were wicked*, Rev. 2. 3. As when the Stomach is of a pure temper and good ſtrength, the leaſt ſurfet or diſtemper that befals, it preſently diſtaſts and disburdens it ſelf with ſpeed. So *David* noted to be *a man after Gods own heart*. He profeſſeth, 101. *Pſal.* 3. 7. *I hate the work of them that turn aſide, he that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell in my houſe, he that telleth lyes, ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* But when the heart becomes like the Stomach, ſo weak it cannot help it ſelf, nor be helped by Phyſick, deſperate diſeaſes and diſſolution of the whol follows, and in reaſon muſt be expected. Hence ſee how God looks at the leaſt connivance, or a faint and feeble kind of oppoſition againſt ſin, as that in which he is moſt highly diſhonored, and he follows it with moſt hideous plagues, as that indulgent carriage of *Ely* towards the vile behavior of his Sons for their groſſer evils, 1 *Sam.* 2. 23. *Why do you ſuch things, It's not well my Sons that I hear ſuch things: It is not well*, and is that all? why, had they either out of ignorance not known their duty or out of ſome ſudden ſurpriſal of a temptation neglected it, it had not been well, but for them ſo purpoſedly to proceed on in the practice of ſuch groſs evils, and for him ſo faintly to reprove: The Lord looks at it as a great ſin thus feebly to oppoſe ſin, and therefore verſe 29. he tells him, *That he honored his Sons above God*, and therefore he profeſſeth, *Far be it from me to maintain thy houſe and comfort, for he that honors me I wil honor, and he that deſpiſeth me ſhall be lightly eſteemed*, verſe

verſe 30. Hence it is the Lord himſelf is called *the holy one of Iſrael*, 1. Hab. 12. *Who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity*, no not in ſuch as profeſs themſelves Saints, though moſt deer unto him, no, nor in his Son the Lord Jeſus, not in his Saints, *Amos*, 8. 7. *The Lord hath ſworn by himſelf, I abhor the excellency of* Jacob; what ever their excellencies, their priviledges are, if they do not abhor ſin, God will abhor them, *Jer.* 22. 24. *Though* Coniah *was as the Signet of my right hand, thence would I pluck him.* Nay, he could not endure the appearance of it in the Lord Chriſt, for when but the reflection of ſin (as I may ſo ſay) fell upon our Savior, even the imputation of our tranſgreſſions to him, though none iniquity was ever committed by him, the Father withdrew his comforting preſence from him, and let looſe his infinite diſpleaſure againſt him, forcing him to cry out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

Yea, Sin is ſo evil, (that though it be in Nature, which is the good Creature of God) that there is no good in it, nothing that God will own; but in the evil of puniſhment it is otherwiſe, for the torments of the Devils, and puniſhments of the damned in Hell, and all the plagues inflicted upon the wicked upon Earth, iſſue from the righteous and revenging Juſtice of the Lord, and he doth own ſuch execution as his proper work, *Iſa.* 45. 7. *Is there any evil in the City*, viz. of puniſhment, *and the Lord hath not done it? I make peace, I create evil, I the Lord do all theſe things*: It iſſues from the Juſtice of God that he cannot but reward every one according to his own waies and works; thoſe are a mans own, the holy one of Iſrael hath no hand in them; but he is the juſt Executioner of the plagues that are inflicted and ſuffered for theſe; and hence our bleſſed Savior becoming our Surety, and ſtanding in our room, he endured the pains of the Second death, even the fierceneſs of the fury of an offended God; and yet it was impoſſi-

ble he could commit the least sin, or be tainted with the least corrupt distemper. And it's certain it's better to suffer all plagues without any one sin, than to commit the least sin, and to be freed from all plagues. Suppose that all miseries and sorrows that ever befel all the wicked in Earth and Hell, should meet together in one soul, as all waters gathered together in one Sea: Suppose thou heardest the Devils roaring, and sawest Hell gaping, and the flames of everlasting burnings flashing before thine eyes; it's certain it were better for thee to be cast into those inconceivable torments than to commit the least sin against the Lord: Thou dost not think so now, but thou wilt find it so one day.

Quest. *But if sin be thus vile in its own nature, why do not men so discern it, so judg it?*

Answ. That I may give a full Answer to this Question, I shall first shew the Causes of mistake: and secondly, the Cure. For the first, There's a five-fold Cause why though sin be so vile, and so great an evil, yet naturally men do not see it so.

I.

1. First, The delusion of Satan dazles the eyes of our minds, and puts false colors upon Courses, paints over the foul face of vice and corruption with the appearance of vertues, and so the deluded sinner like *Jacob* in the darkness of his deceit, takes *Leah* for *Rachel*, bad for good. So the Disciples took their passion for zeal, *Shall we call for fire from Heaven* to destroy the Samaritans, because of their discourteous dealing, *as Elias did?* Our Savior returns, *You know not what Spirit you are of*, Luke, 9. 55. q. d. it's your rash anger that transports you, not the Spirit of zeal that guides you; *Judas* pretends Providence and compassionate care for the poor, when it was to promote his own profit, *John* 12. 6. Lukewarmness goes masked under the name of discretion; licentious wantonness in the abuse of the priviledges of the Gospel, goes vailed with the Profession of the Liberty of the Gospel, and while they profess, they

they must not be servants to men, they serve their own distempered affections.

Men judg their sins according to the present sence and feeling of the flesh, and the verdict of their sensual appetites pass thereupon, and sit down under the sentence of their corrupt heaats, and they report of things according as they relish them. It is with a sinful soul as with a sick body; the sick man that is distempered in his stomach, and his mouth out of tast, and his pallat out of temper, he reports of his meat and diet he takes as his pallat relisheth it: So that in issue he tels you not what in truth it is, but how and what he tasts; bitter things he calls sweet, because they are so to his Tast; sweet things bitter, because they are so to his sence, though far otherwise in themselves. So it is with a distempered heart, though otherwise gracious, if yet it judgeth of them according to the relish of carnal Reason, or the present apprehensions, their inordinate passions would put upon them; *Jonah* in a feaverish fit of a passionate distemper, he strikes he cares not whom, falls out with God, his Providence, nay, his Counsel though most seasonably, sweetly dispensed to him, *Dost thou well to be angry* Jonah? *Yea* (saies he) *I do well to be angry, and that unto death*, Jonah, 4. 9. his passion like the pallat of his sick soul, relisheth it so, to his own inordinate distemper, and so he judgeth it. 1 *Kings*, 22. 8. 18. The heart of *Ahab* was inordinately transported with a venemous hatred against *Michaiah*, and his message, though it was no other counsel than the Lord had revealed, and he charged him to speak as in his Name; yet it is no wise pleasing to his pallat, and so he speaks of it, *Did not I tell thee he would not speak good to me?* So it was with *Asah*, when the Prophet seasonably and sadly condemned his distrustful carriage, 2. *Chron.* 16. out of an unbeleeving wrathful disposition he cannot relish it, but it carries the tast of an insolent contempt and therefore he imprisons him, and very likely all those

that came to speak for him, and plead in his behalf, for so the words follow, *He put many of the people into prison*, 10. *verse*. while he was in the this distemper his spirit could savour nothing nor yet perceive the bitterness of those hainous and high handed provocations of his against the truth of the Lord and his Servants.

3. Though the mind be enlightened and the judgment also convinced of the sinfulness of the course, and his Conscience is privy thereunto and gives him many a pluck yet he doth not perceive the plague and venome in it, because he judgeth it by the present profit he sees or pleasure he receives from it, and so in truth sees the profit and the pleasure and contentment but sees not the sin; As it is with the bittrest pills when they are sugred or covered over with some pleasing Conserve, they are swallowed readily without the least appearance of distaft or harshness, and the reason is easie to conceave he tasted nothing but the Sugar, though he took the pill down in it. So it is with many base and wretched lusts, which are the very *gal of bitterness*, and cary deadly poyson with them, they are so Sugared, and covered over with applause and credit in the world, pleasing contents or earthly conveniences, that the mind is so taken up with the sweet and suitablness he eyes in them, that it attends not the right judgment of the sin but lets it down without any consideration; Sathan playes here the cunning Apothecary and therefore orders his Physick so, as he would have it retayned or kept in the Stomach (like a potion) not cast & vomited up again; Hence in all his enticements to evil there is nothing but pleasing contents presented, that the sin may not be perceived or scant thought upon, he shewes the bait but hides the hooke. In all his discouragements whereby he would skare and keep off the heart from duty, he casts in nothing but difficulties impossibilities hazards and extremities, and fearful expectation of unsufferable calamities, That the dreadfulness of the danger may take

take off the heart from affecting or the mind from attending the duty, thus the ſinner ſees not the good of the duty, but the ghaſtly viſage of deſperate inconveniencies, that ſeem to attend it. The extorting cozening Chapman, the idling laboring man look only to the gaine they get, not the wrong they do, The Adulterer hath the dilight in his eye that may ſuit and ſatiſfy the fleſh, not the ſtain he leaves upon his ſoul and the guilt upon his Conſcience, and the wrath he treaſures up until the day of reckoning. Thus thoſe Theeves entice their Companion to ſide with them in their courſe Prov. 1. 13. *we ſhal find al precious ſubſtance, we ſhall fil our howſes with ſpoyle*, ſo the Harlot inveigles the young man, and preſents nothing before him, but promiſes of pleaſing content Prov. 7. 18. 22. 23. *I have decked my bed with coverings of Tapeſtry perfumed it with Mirrh Aloes and Cinamon, come let us take our fil of love Thus ſhe forceth him with her fayre words, and he followes her like an Ox to the ſlaughter, and a Fool to the ſtocks, till a dart ſtrike through his Liver and he knoweth not that it is for his Life.* So the enimy with the firſt Adam, *ye ſhal be as Gods Gen.* 3. and ſo the ſecond Adam *Al theſe Kingdoms with al the Glory of them wil I give thee. Math.* 4.

On the other ſide he ſtaves off from holy ſervices by ſhewing nothing but the dreadfulneſs of the evil that attend them, that ſo the ſoul attends not the good of the duty that follwes it. Thus he prevayled with Peter he layd before him the fearfulneſs of the danger now eminent & ſuch as in reaſon might draw on death, and his thoughts were ſo taken up with attendance to that, that he had no leiſure to conſider the loathſomeneſs of his Lying, Curſing, Blaſphemy and unfaithfulneſs in denying his Maſter untill at laſt Chriſt looked, and he remembred and *he went out and wept bitterly, Math.* 26. *Laſt.* ſo they looked upon the ſtature of the Giants, the height of their walled Cities, and their Iron Chariots

riots, and therefore did not expel them, and so they became thorns in their eyes and pricks in their sides, *Bribes blind the eyes of the wise*, because the understanding looks not upon the Cause, but them, and the Cause in them. So the pleasures of sin Bribes the heart and blind the eye.

4. A fourth ground of mistake is because men judg of the evil of their sins by the patience and long suffering of God, which he extends towards them in the midst of their deservings; that because they are not now troubled they think they shal never be plagued, because *that judgment is not presently executed* it wil never be inflicted. Out of a secret kind of Atheism and desperate slighting of the truth of God, in the vileness of their sins which it discovers, and the judgments it denounceth. This was their guise in Psal. 50. 21. *I held my tongue and sayed nothing, and thou thoughtest wickedly that I was such a one as thy self; but I wil reprove thee and set thy sins in order before thee.* Its so at this day, men judge Gods connivance and forbearance a kind of allowance, and because he forbears to reprove them, that therefore he wil never come into judgment against them; when men see *the way of the wicked prosper, and them exalted that rebelliously transgresse*, they conclude sin is not so dangerous as Ministers would bear men in hand, nor God so severe against it or them. And therfore they look at the threatnings of scripture as words of Course used as in way of policy that God only would awe and scare men but doth not purpose to Condemn men. Why do ye not see (say they) that the most base on earth have commonly the best portion and largest allowance of the most pleasing Contents? *do not their Brests run ful of Milk, and their Bones ful of Marrow? do not their Eyes stand out with fatness, and have they not more than their hearts desire?* Psal. 73. when such as walk with most exactness are fed with bread of sorrow and water of affliction as their Constant

conſtant diet. We ſee no ſuch danger in ſin, nor no ſuch indignation the Lord bears againſt it. Upon this ground it was that the prophane, in *Mal.* 3. 15. make open proteſtation againſt the practice of Godlineſs, *We count the proud happy* (ſay they) The ſtrength of this Temptation took *Aſaph* aſide, and almoſt turned him out of the way, *Pſal.* 73. 2. when he ſaw the *proſperity of the wicked*, and the Lords bounty and forbearance, he thought *he had clenſed his heart, and waſhed his hands in vain.* And it was too hard for all the art he had to help himſelf. The wiſe man makes it a concluſion, which is ſetled in the hearts of all the ſons of men beyond all doubt, *Eccleſ.* 8. 11. *Becauſe ſentence is not ſpeedily executed, therefore the hearts of the ſons of man are wholly ſet to do evil*: becauſe the Lord out of his long-ſuffering abates them the preſent feeling of the plagues and dreadfulneſs of their ſins, therfore they determine it, there is no ſuch poyſon in them.

The Fifth and laſt cauſe of miſtake, is want of that morning light, that Spiritual knowledg of God, and his Soveraign good pleaſure over his Creatures, whereby he hath right to rule in the hearts of men, and they are bound to conform themſelves thereunto. When the Lord Chriſt would diſcover the error and falſeneſs of that ſelf conceited preſumption the Church of *Laodicea* had of her own worth, *Rev.* 3. 17. *Thou ſayeſt thou art rich and encreaſed in goods, and wanteſt nothing*: the reaſon he gives whence this erroneous apprehenſion came, was her ignorance, *She knew not that ſhe was poor and miſerable, and blind, and naked*; *ſhe wanted eye-ſalve to anoint her eyes that ſhe might ſee.* The laſt reſolution of theſe miſconceivings in a ſinful carriage, our Savior refers hither, *John*, 15. 21. *All theſe things they will do unto you, becauſe they have not known him that ſent me.* They wanted a ſpiritual underſtanding, and right conceiving of God, and that was the reaſon they ruſhed into the croud of all evils in a heedleſs and careleſs 5.

lesse way without any consideration.

II. The Cure of these mistakes is by a double means.

1. Look upon thy sins as they will look upon thee at the day of death, and the day of judgment, for there they will look with a ghastly visage when all the profit thou hast gained, the pleasure thou hast taken, the content thou hast promised to thy self, will take their leaves of thy sins, and of thy soul also, and nothing will be left but the filth and guilt of them. It's said of *Moses*, Heb. 11. 25. *That he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which were but for a season*; q. d. Sin remains alwaies with the wicked, but the pleasure doth not, that is but for a season, and that is but the time of Gods forbearance, that he is pleased to abate the sinner of his displeasure and vengeance, at the utmost it is but for the term of this life; at the day of death and judgment the pleasures of sin will be out of season. There is no pleasure the Adulterer can take in his lusts then, the Drunkard in his cup, the covetous worldling in in his wealth, they are out of date, the season is gone, the applause of the proud, and the pomp of the great ones is out of season, only the guilt and filth of sin remains, stares them in the face, and gnaws their Conscience, and *eats their flesh*, as *James* speaks, *as it were with fire, cries day and night in the ears of the Lord of Hosts against them*: It is said of the Whore of *Babylon* at her fall, Rev. 18. 14. *That the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, all things which are dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.* Let thy sins now appear as they will then appear, when all the pleasing, and dainty, and goodly contentments that thou promisedst to thy self are departed, when all the paint, and colors, and covers are removed, all the sweetness whereby they were sawced are taken away, and thy distempers are stripped naked of them, and thou canst find them no more. The proud,

proud, malicious, unclean, peeviſh, that have pleaſed themſelves in their ſinful diſtempers, and continued in them, they will find their ſins indeed, and they will find them lie down with them in the Grave, where they will rot and riſe with them to Judgment, and go with them to Hell: but the thought and remembrance of their delights, the looking upon the Harlots, and ſight of their fellow drunkards, ſhall encreaſe their torments, and they ſhall curſe themſelves, and the day that ever they ſaw one another. Upon this Conſideration it was that *Peter* gave the awaking Alarum, 2. *Pet.* 3. 10. The time will come *when the Heavens ſhall melt with fire, and the Earth, and all the works thereof ſhall be burnt up.* All the ryot of the Epicure, the rage of the Oppreſſor, the greedy purſuit of the Worldling, all the works on Earth ſhall be conſumed, no more matchings and quaffings with Drunkards, only that that touched the Lord as an eternal God that ſhall continue, and that is the Holineſs of that Obedience that was ſincere, that was performed to God; and the guilt of the ſin that was committed againſt him, all the carnal contents that accompany a ſinful courſe, they are but *works of the Earth*, they will be conſumed. But that which was againſt Heaven, and againſt God, that will never be conſumed, neither wild-fire, nor Hel-fire will conſume that; but it will live there to work thine everlaſting ruine. Labor therefore to make theſe things preſent with thy heart, and real to thy own apprehenſion, be not deluded by Gods long ſufferance, the longer the blow is coming, the heavier it will be; the greater forbearance, the greater vengeance; and thou that haſt had the Treaſury of Gods Bounty and Goodneſs powred out unto thee, *Thou treaſureſt up wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of Gods righteous Judgments.*

Reader take No

2. Strive mightily to attain a cleer ſight of God himſelf, as he is pleaſed to diſpenſe himſelf in his Holineſs and Goodneſs to the ſoul to be enjoyed as an all-ſufficient

good, beyond all created Excellencies in the Creature. It was the advice of our Savior, *Rev.* 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me eye-Salve that thou mayest annoint thine Eyes, that so thou mayest see.* For darkness is not seen but only by the help of light, Crookedness by the Rule of Straightness, He that knows not the Rule of true Latin will never be able to know what is false, and and so it is in any Art, he that knows not the Rule of building, planting, he will never discover an error in either. The like we may say and conceive touching the discovery of sin, because it is a swerving from the righteous and holy will of God in his government & communication of himself to the Creature, it is a professed jussling with that, and his wisdom and goodness therein. unless your Eyes be anointed with Eye Salve to see him and the purity and spiritualness of his pleasure, as that which only should rule us, and only can satisfie us. We shall never see sin in its own nakedness and Nature. And hence it is, when the wicked in the trouble and terror of their Consciences feel the fierceness of the fury of the Almighty seizing upon their Souls, they know now the smart of sin, and God also as a righteous Judg, whose anger they can neither avoid nor bear: This is only a Consequent and a fruit of sin, and comes after it. But to see aright the Soveraign Spiritualness of his Wisdom to guide them, and the all-sufficiency of his Goodness far exceeding all created excellencies, and their sinning as a going from both these, if they be misguided in the one, they cannot but mistake the other. *Job*, 42. 4. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye sees thee, therefore I abhor my self*, when he saw God cleerly, he saw his sin cleerly: So the Convert in 1 *Cor.* 14. 24. *When he had the thoughts of his heart discovered and made manifest, he confesseth God is in you of a truth*, because he neither saw God nor himself before, and when he sees the one, he sees the other, 1 *John* 3. 7. *He that commits sin, hath neither seen him,*

him, nor known him, and theſe be the terms of true converſion ſo ſet by the Apoſtle, *turned from the power of Satan unto God*, Acts 26. 18. q. d. they fell ſhort of the Soveraign Power and Holineſs of God before.

The ſecond Particular wherein the true ſight of ſin conſiſts.

We have done with the Firſt, What it is to ſee Sin cleerly: We are now to enquire of the Second, Wherein this true ſight of Sin conſiſts, that is, we muſt ſee it alſo convictingly; what it is to us in the work of it, as wel as what it is in it ſelf, in the Nature of it. This appears in a double act, or in two Things:

1 *We muſt apply ſin particularly to our ſelves.*
2 *It muſt be ſetled with an over-powring ſtrength, upon a mans own ſoul.*

We ſhall open both theſe in the order propounded.

I.

He that ſees his Sins convictingly, muſt not content himſelf with the notion and ſpeculation of Sin, to ſpeak freely of it, to ſet out the compaſs of his corruption, or to lay out the loathſomneſs thereof in a judicious and pregnant diſcourſe. This a wicked man may learn, this a right godly man may ſomtimes do, and yet do himſelf no good by it. Therefore it is required he muſt ſee it with a particular application of it to himſelf and his own eſtate; and paſs the ſame ſentence upon thoſe he finds in his own boſom, which he did upon any when they were preſented to his own apprehenſion in the general without partiality. There are two things here, we ſhall open both.

1.

He muſt turn his eye inward, follow his own diſtemper home to his own doors, and cauſe his own judgment to reflect upon his own follies and corruptions. This is called in Scripture, *The returning into a mans own heart*, 1 Kings, 8. 46, 47. *If the people of Iſrael ſin againſt thee, and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, ſo that they carry them captives, yet*

if they shall bethink themselves: the Original thus; *if they shall bring it back to their own heart*. They had common apprehensions of sins as they saw them committed by others, or as the word revealed them in the evil of their own nature; but they did not look inward to the loathsom vileness of those evils which lay in their own bosoms, until they came into Captivity. Thus the Prodigal is said *to come to himself*, Luk. 15. 17. he had lived without any search and consideration of his own waies, lost himself in letting loose his thoughts in the eager pursuit of his own lusts; now he began to take an account of his own course, to see how the case stands with him, in regard of his own corruption and condition in particular. The want of this the Prophet *Jeremy* makes to be the principal cause why men rush into the commission of sin, and continue therein, without any remorse, *Jer.* 8. 56. *Why is this People of Jerusalem slidden back with a perpetual back-sliding? they hold fast deceit, and refuse to return*: they sense themselves with some false imaginations, quiet themselves by some self-deceiving mistakes, and so think they need not, and therefore do not return; the reason is rendred in the next words; *I hearkned and heard, and no man repented*; and why that? *No man said, what have I done?* they bring not their own carriages to the scanning, each man will be ready to be Eagle-eyed into other mens occasions, and can easily enquire, and question, and determine, and say, others have done thus, and so, here such have fallen, therein such and such have failed, but no man saies, *What have I done?* and therefore become fearless of what they have done, and careless of what they do: but each man rusheth into his own wretched course as the horse into the battel, because he carries not the light of the Truth into each crevis and corner of his conscience, to pry into the secret passages of his own spirit, and judg aright of that, else be his knowledg never so large, he will get little good by it. The piece that hath

hath his full charge, if it carry but level, give fire to it, it hits and kils the live mark at which it is shot, but never hurts the shooter unless it recoyl in the full power, then the man that dischargeth it hardly escapes with life. It is so with the understanding that stands charged, that is, fully informed with a cleer discovery of the nature of sin, it's able to dart in that light into the minds of others, that may dazle their eyes, daunt and wound their consciences with the dreadful apprehensions of the hainousness of their evils, and work their hearts through the blessing of the Lord to a godly remorse for it: but unless their own thoughts recoyl back again upon their own miscarriages, and the falseness of their own hearts, they will never be awed, or humbled, or helped against their own sins thereby. Here is then the rule we must arrest our own souls in special. *Achan* was never troubled all the while he heard there was an execrable thing in the Camp in general, but when the lot had found him, and all Israel had charged the evil upon him, then his heart failed. So we should not content our selves to know and confess that sin is an execrable thing in general, which causes Gods gracious presence to be estranged from us, but leave not before we see the lot fall upon *Achan*, before thou dost attach thine own heart, take it in the very fact, and as men deal with mutinous Traitors, drag thy wretched and rebellious heart before the Tribunal of the Lord, and deal faithfully, and give in witness against it, say, Lord, there be many Traitors and Rebels abroad in the world which dishonor thy Name, grieve thy Spirit, oppose thy Kingdom, break thy Law, loe here they be, it's my heart that hath been stubborn and proud, it is my mind that is vain, my affections loose, my life barren and unprofitable; here are those restless envyings, unclean lustings, covetous desires, no better than murderers, adulterers, theeves, loe here they be, Lord here they are.

2. We

2. We must also pass sentence impartially without any respect to any private end, or ease or quier, which our own carnal hearts would happily cast into the consideration; These and these sinns are as bad and as base and as dangerous in this vile heart of mine as in any heart I know under the cope of Heaven if not worse, nay what ever abomination is in the bottom of Hell, and in the heart of Beelzebub, the spawn of the like sins and of the same hellish nature, are in my soul, they are the seed of the Serpent and that they break not out into the like hideous practises its no thank to my corrupt nature that hinders me, but thy Grace and providence restraynes me from such evils: Its our desperate weakness, and a great part of our misery, that we are apt to be favourable to our own follies, that sin should be of annother appearance & apprehension when we see it in our selves then when we pass sentence upon it as it is presented in the word and in its own nature. Impannel a jury of the most wicked nay the worst of men that have been trained up under the Preaching of the word and confess the Scriptures to be the word of God which cannot deceive, and let the text be propounded and their opinions be asked in that case, 2. *Thes.* 1. 9 *The Lord wil come in Flaming Fire rendring Vengeance to them that know him not, and obey not the Gospell*, they wil all give in their verdict as one man with one mind, such as be guilty of such disobedience, must certainly have this direful Vengeance from the hand of the Almighty, but infer, therfore this is their lot and allowance from the Lord, because they have not, they do not obey the Gospel, their Consciences, their Conversations do testify so much. Now the case is altered, when its once come to their particular, Its another kind of ignorance and disobedience, and after another manner acted then theirs, say they.

This slight of our deluded mindes and self deceiving hearts, the Philosopher in the practise of men even by the

the twilight of the common Principles of reason remaining in the decayes of nature observed. For taking it for granted that no man doth wil evil under the name of evil but as it comes under the appearance of som good and that all men easily grant and freely confess that Drunkenness, Injustice, Intemperance are evil, the question then growes how these men judging these carriages to be evil, are daily taken aside with the Commission of them. Ask the Drunkard whether surfeting be unlawful, he confesseth it Loathsom and yet commits it, Ask the Blasphemer whether swearing be a sin, He wil profess it detestable at one breath, and practice it at the next. Theeves themselves count it unjust that any by cunning should deceive them, cry out of falshood and yet by force presently spoyl others; the ground is here. When the question is put and propounded in the general, they wil grant it. ; when it comes to their particular for such a man at this time upon this occasion in this company for such an end, to be loose or tipple in this manner this is not unlawful. For in these the Devil casts in some circumstances of conveniency, Credit, Friendship, Familiarity (as the Lawyers alter the Case by circumstances) and by these he would put another appearance upon sinful carriages and so make them seem other: our carnal hearts they give in evidence of content and delight, of suitableness, and serviceableness, to our reason, and so would have the sentence pass for them, that in case they may be tolerated, and not utterly abandoned. *So David saw sin in the Parable not in his own particular:* So Judah *Tamar hath played the Harlot let her be burnt*, when he himself was guilty of the same sin *Gen.* 38. 24. Therfore thou must see thy sins with particular Application, that they are in thee as in others, and as bad in thee as thou countest them base in themselves.

II. The 2d thing in this convicting sight is that aswe must see them applyed particularly, *so we must settle them overpoweringly*

verpowringly upon our Consciences : otherwise such a particular apprehension may and will suddenly pass away, and the steams of our distempers wil easily alter and corrupt our understandings, and bring the cause quite about. This particular application wil be as a sudden flash of Lightning sliding through our minds, which leaves all as dark as ever when once over, therefore there must be a settling of this with an overpowring strength, leaving it there enrolled that it may stand upon record in a mans Conscience. The former arrests the sinner, this latter layes hold upon him, pinions him, and imprisons him as it were, until he have answered what the truth hath against him, herein lyes the life and power of a conviction and if it be of the right stamp and carry indeed an overpowring virtu in it, it will appear in three things.

It must be,

1. *Undeniable,*
2. *Immoveable,*
3. *Victorious and invincible.*

1. Conviction must carry an undeniable evidence with it that as the truth hath layd and pleaded an action against the soul, so the understanding may be forced to confess it, and sits down satisfied under the uncontroulable authority thereof and of the truth therein. The Scriptures are so pregnant, reasons so plain, arguments so strong, that though before they did not see, they could not think it, or be brought to beleeve, that their sins were so heinous or their condition so miserable, yet they now know not how to gainsay it. Thus *Job*, when he stood upon the terms of his justification at several times when God had terrified him by the discovery of himself, he then yeilds the day, *Job.* 7. 20. *I have sinned what shal I do unto thee Oh thou preserver of men* q. d. I have no reasons to alledge, no excuses to make, no arguments to plead, I confess the action, I have sinned. Thus the Lord took down the height of

Pauls

Pauls apprehenſion made him ſee and yield his error. *I verily thought* (ſaies he) *I ſhould do many things againſt the Name of Jeſus*, Acts, 26. 9. let him then maintain his Opinion, and juſtifie his Practice, *Acts.* 9. 5. As he was going to *Damaſcus*, the Lord met him, and there ſuddenly ſhined a light round about him from Heaven; he fell to the Earth, and heard a voyce, *Saul, Saul*, why perſecuteſt thou me? it is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks, *and he trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, Who art thou Lord? He anſwered, I am Jeſus: Then ſaies he, Lord, What wilt thou have me to do?* See how he falls in his action; you do not read that he pleaded his Commiſſion, or ſhewed his Letters, or went about to maintain his Practice; he ſaies not thus, Lord, I do no more than I may, than I have Authority to warrant me, and commiſſion to bear me out in my proceeding, he that *thought he ſhould do many things againſt the Name of Jeſus*, he durſt not bear up himſelf by all the Authority he had to gainſay Jeſus in the leaſt. So the Convert in 1 *Cor.* 14. 24. when the word comes home to his heart in the undeniable evidence of it in ranſacking the ſecrets of his ſoul, he falls before the Truth; ſo the Text, *He will fall down and ſay, God is in you of a Truth*; thus in the woman of *Samaria*, when ſhe had in a ſcornful manner ſlighted our Savior, his Nation and Religion; It's a wonder you Jews ſhould ask Water of a Samaritan; you Jews ſay that in *Jeruſalem* there is the only place of Worſhip when our Fathers worſhip in this Mount: Our Savior comes neerer, *Go call thine Husband*; ſaies ſhe, *I have no husband*, True (ſaies our Savior) *thou haſt had five, and he whom thou now haſt, is not thy husband*, John 4. 19. She then ſits down before him, and inſtead of ſcorning, falls a wondering, *Is not this the Meſſias?* This is that our Savior intended when he promiſed to *ſend the Spirit to convince the world of ſin*, John 16. 8. he puts ſuch evidence and wiſdom into the diſpenſation

of the Word, that as it is said of *Stephen*, they could not resist the Spirit by which he spake; so here, That though the sinner would gainsay, yet it followeth and forceth him to yield. As the Angel said to *Sarah*, Gen. 18. 15. *Nay, but thou didst laugh.* So the Spirit follows the soul, and answers, and removes these Cavils and Objections that the sinner makes, and still shews and saies, nay, but this is thy sin, and this will be thy damnation; that the sinner is forced to yield, and say, this is the Truth, I cannot gainsay it; it is my condition, I cannot deny it; this is my sin, and will be my ruine, I cannot but expect it.

2. It must be Immovable, of such Vertue, That as it brings the understanding to sit down under the evidence of the Truth as confessing of it; so it keeps it under the sting and stroke of it. That as it is with the Bird in the Net, the more she stirs to get out, the faster she is taken: So with the sinner, the more he desires to fly from the Truth, to forget it, the more strongly the Truth takes hold of him in the terror of it. So that be where he will, do what he will, go whether he will, the Truth will go with him as a Jaylor with the Malefactor; for the Truth is so dreadful when it brings in the discovery of our sins at the first, that it makes a man weary of each place, each condition, yea, and of his life, that he could wish not to be, that he may not be under the terror of it. And therefore though he cannot gainsay the Evidence of it, yet he would devise some waies and shifts that may be to take off the edg of the dreadfulness of it, or make an escape from under the stroak and strength of it: but all in vain; for the Conviction is immovable, no man can take it off if God set it on: All the Carnal Reasonings, corrupt Pleas, sinful Cavils, whereby men would put by the blow, they do all vanish before this Light, as mists before the Sun. The more he opposeth it, the more he is under guilt, and so the strength of the convi-

cting

cting Truth; his sins way-lay him in every place; he sees his sins dished out before him on the Table where he eats, lie down with him in the Bed where he rests, when he dreams they terrifie him, when he awakes they are as so many Sergeants to arrest him, & summon him to Judgment they are imprinted in the paths where he walks, and where ever he goes, he sees his sins going before him, and he going to Hell with them.

Such an immovable discovery the Lord set upon the heart of *Job* when he let in the light of himself, that he sits down in silence, and hath not one word to say, no way to wave it or to slip aside from under the evidence of it, *Job.* 40. 4, 5. *Once have I spoken, but I will say no more; yea twice, but I will go no further.* While his friends were talking with him, their Arguments were so feeble that he could find a way out, and could free himself from the stroak, and deliver himself from the dint of the blow: but now the conviction besieged him with such evidence that no carnal reason could relieve him, stops all passages that there is not a muse or crevis for him to creep out, therefore he sits down in silence, sees he cannot ease himself, nor wind away by any pretences and wiles he can devise: It is so with a corrupt heart beleaguer'd with the light, so that if his carnal friends, or ignorant neighbors, his loose companions would strive to take off his thoughts, alter his apprehensions, and abate the edg of the blow, and seem to put in bail for him; his state is not so miserable and helpless, nor his sins so vile, quiet your heart, there is mercy with God, and satisfaction in the merits of Christ. He replies, I have often cozened my self with such devices, *miserable comforters are ye all.* I have thought as you do, and said that which you speak in former times; but alas, these shifts will not serve the turn. Christ came not to comfort sinners, but to convert them also; to humble sinners as well as redeem them; *he came to save*

ſinners but to deſtroy their ſins firſt; I never found the one, I muſt not expect the other, nor you neither. This is *to captivate the thoughts*, to bring them under the ſpear, under the Authority of the Truth that they may not once huſh or ſtir, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. And this is *that ſpirit of Bondage* the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *Rom.* 8. 15. It makes us ſenſible of our ſlavery, and binds a man hand and foot as it were, fenceth his way with fears, beſets his paſſage on every ſide with expectation of evil, which he cannot tell how to bear, or how to avoid; he ſees he can procure no relief nor ſuccor to himſelf, and fears he ſhall never obtain none from the Lord, dares not commit ſin as formerly, yet cannot tell how to be freed from it. So that as *Reuben* ſometimes in another caſe, ſo the ſinner in this, *and I, whither ſhall I go?* Gen. 37. 30. evils appear from every quarter which way ſoever he looks; if to Heaven, there is Juſtice to puniſh; if to Hell, there are Devils to torment; into himſelf, there is Conſcience to accuſe; on Earth in his dayly courſe, there is nothing but his dayly rebellions, and his confuſion dayly before his face, and the truth is the more terrible becauſe he hath withſtood it ſo long: That as it fares with the priſoner that had the freedom of the priſon while he carried himſelf fairly, but becauſe he hath been taken in ſome falſe pranks, and plotting an eſcape, he is now laid in the Dungeon and laded with Irons, now never like to ſee good day, or look for any breathing. So here, my eſtate is more miſerable becauſe I have oppoſed the means that might have procured my help, the checks of Conſcience I have ſmothered or ſlighted; many warnings I have had, but willingly forgot them; many ſad reproofs that laid hold on me, but I ſtudied how to wreſt away my thoughts; it's juſt with God to load me with Curſes, which would never look for comfort from God in a right way. If ever there was a Rebel, I am he; if ever God condemned a Rebel, he wil condemn me.

Laſtly,

Lastly, This Conviction is victorious and invincible, It doth not only stop the mouth of carnal Reason, and the cavils thereof, but also displaceth it. It not only stills the shifts and pretences of the sinner, but makes the mind and heart give attendance to the Truth, to be subject thereunto, and to take the impression thereof. For otherwise the sinner thus tyred and dauled by the dayly laying at of the Truth, may either happily lie still, though not cavil with it, yet not give attendance to it. But in a stupid kind of sottish senselesness, wear out the blow, and so wast away to nothing, as many out of sorrow have become like senceless blocks. Though their practice hath not been evil, yet they have had no heart to good; or else they fall to desperate prophaneness or professed opposition; when they cannot escape the prison, they'l break the prison, and lay violent hands upon the Keeper, *Rom.* 1. 18. *They hold down the Truth in unrighteousness*, they imprison the Truth while the Truth should imprison them, therefore when the Lord will settle an over-powring Conviction, he makes it victorious: Therefore he is said, *Job*, 36. 9, 10. *When he shews them their transgressions, he commands that they return from iniquity.* Truth wil break out, and over-bear and force the mind and heart to give attendance and take the impression of it, as when the Conquerer and he that hath got the Victory, comes in place, all give attendance unto his command. The want of the maintaining this conquering power of a Conviction, I take to be the cause why many even of Gods own are so marvelously taken aside after al the helps they do enjoy, and the resolutions they take up. I have often wondred when a man hath bewailed with much bitterness in daies of humiliation such and such evils, begged for grace and help, and resolved against them; they know and confess it's in vain to cavil, or think to make an escape, nay they reject such a purpose, and yet they are taken aside, and that strangely and ordinarily they fall again to tamper

per with their old corruptions. They do not put this Conviction into commission, they do not make it victorious, or maintain it so, or the Authority thereof, so as to force attendance. When the Dam is good, and the Mill tight, why goes it not? There is not so much Water kept as to drive it, because they have let out the stream and strength another way; therefore there is not so much power in a conviction as to force attendance, and to drive the heart to obedience. Therefore as *Paul* said to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 15, 16. *Meditate upon these things, and continue in them, or be in these things.* So you must be in a Conviction, and continue under it if you would find it victorious, and then it wil be so first or last, and wil eat out al opposition, though with much ado. As it is with *Aqua fortis* if laid upon Iron, though it do not at once, and suddenly, yet secretly and insensibly it wil eat the Iron in pieces. So it is with a Truth which God wil make victorious, it will lie upon the Spirit of a man, and eat there, and work there, and break out effectually, it may be many yeers after, *Job*, 33. 16. this is called *the sealing of an Instruction*; which is to add Authority and Soveraignty to it, as when the Edict was sealed by the intreaty of *Haman*, there was no opposing, no gainsaying of it.

The Reasons of the Point (which was the fourth Particular attended in the Explication) come now to be considered: And these are two:

Reas. 1. The first is taken from the order which the Lord in the way of his providence and work of nature hath placed betwixt the mind and the heart, the understanding and wil of man. these two faculties have a near kind of correspondencie, the one to help forward the work of the other. Knowledg and understanding is the inlet into the soul nothing comes to the heart nor can work upon it but so far as knowledg makes way, & ushers it in

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(as it were) into the presence of the wil and leaves an impression thereof upon it. We use to say that which the eye sees not the heart rues not; that which the understanding conceives not, the wil is not, nay cannot be affected with, if Good to embrace it, if evil to be burdened and troubled therewith. Its the method *David* observed in Gods dispensation towards him, when his heart was brought to a hatred against the evil of his waies, *Psal.* 119. 107. *By thy Commandements have I got understanding therefore I hate every false way.* Unless a right understanding go before, a through hatred wil not follow after. As it is in the body unless the stomach receive and hold and convey also the purgation either to the spleen or lower parts of the body be the receit never so strong yet wil it never stir the humor, or trouble nature though the distemper were abundant & dangerous. Because in an ordinary course of providence, there is no way to come to the humor but by this means. Its so in the soul, be the truths delivered attended with never so much terror and power, able to sink the heart of a sinful Creature as not able to endure the dread of it, if yet the understanding conceives not the nature of such truths, nor convey and settle them sadly and Convictingly upon the heart, its not at all stirred in the least measure therewith much less troubled with the danger discovered therein, because they cannot reach the heart, therefore can never work upon it. As through ignorance we commit sin because we see not the evil in it, so after commission we sorrow not because we apprehend not the vileness and danger *Acts.* 3. 17. *I know that through ignorance you did it, as did also your Fathers,* 1. Cor. 2. 8. *For had they known it they would never have crucified the Lord of life,* It fares with a false-hatred sinner as it did with the wife of *Jeroboam*, when she came to enquire of her sick Child, all the while she had received no certain evidence, whether it would dy or live her heart was quieted and comforted

forted in her preſent hopes. But when *Abijah* the Prophet related the meſſage of the Lord, *Come in thou wife of Jeroboam why faineſt thou thy ſelf to be another? behold I am ſent to thee with heavy tidings. the Lord wil bring evil upon the houſe of* Jeroboam *and wil cut off him that is left, get thee home to thy houſe, and aſſoon as thy feet enter into thy houſe the Child ſhal dy,* this ſunk her hopes, ſo fares it with a ſalſ-harted ignorant ſinner he may be quieted with the perſent appreſion, of his good condition when he hath no evidence to the contrary. But when the Lord ſets up an overpouring conviction in the mind wch may give in certain and infallible witneſs of its woful and wretched eſtate Hear thou falſ-hearted hypocrite why faineſt thou thy ſelf to be another? and befooleſt thy ſelf with vayn hopes behold here is heavy tidings ſent unto thee from the Lord of hoſts. thou art yet *in the gal of bitterneß in the bond of iniquity* and if thou dieſt ſo, thou wilt certainly periſh from the preſence of the Lord for ever. This faſtening the truth upon the conſcience comes home and forceth the heart to feel and to be affected therewith.

Reaſ. 2. *Ignorance fruſtrates wholly the end of all the means we uſe, and the endeavours we take up for reformation of the evills of our hearts and lives.* For.

1. Firſt it miſleads all our endeavors that they ſucceed not; it miſleads our whol courſe and our proceedings againſt our ſins, and out of miſtakes preſents our corruption as appearing ſweet through our miſguided apprehenſion, and cauſes us to oppoſe our Saviour Chriſt and his truth that would ſubdue them. This *Paul* profeſſed to be the ground of his miſguided carriage, when he ſhould have perſecuted the enemies of the Church he purſues the Church and that out of zeal, *Phil.* 3. 6. *concerning zeal I perſecuted the Church,* ſo far from finding his ſin bitter to him or having his heart broken from it, as that he purſues the practiſe

practice of it with the greateſt expreſſion of zeal, as that which deſerved the beſt of his endeavour and wherein he might ſpend the beſt of his pains and that you may ſee how ready we are in the dark to put up Snakes in our boſoms inſtead of ſweet flowers. He nakedly and ingeniouſly confeſſed whither his ignorance led. *I did verily think in my ſelf I ſhould do many things againſt the Name of Jeſus. Acts.* 26. He that conceived it as a matter of duty to do ſuch things, his heart upon ſuch grounds under ſuch deluſions would never be carryed againſt theſe, Ignorance wil make a man ſwallow the worſt without any change, 1 *John* 16. 2. *the time will come that they who ſhall kill you, will think they do God good ſervice*, that which keeps the ſoul inſenſible of the bitterneſs of ſin, and from feeling of the weight of ſin, that will alſo keep it from being weary of it, and willing to part with it It's a popiſh practice and a principle of the power of darkneſs. Ignorance is the Mother of devotion; when men cannot tell how to lead themſelves or ſee their own way you may lead them which way you wil, and if once Satan can keep a man from the ſight of his ſin he wil keep him ſure under the command of ſin, and drive him to do his drudgery and that with delight and reſolution, when the Phyliſtians had put out *Sampſons* eyes, they led him whither they would and made him do what they would. *Paul* in his ignorance ſtrikes a Friend inſtead of an Enemy, and ſtrikes he neither knowes nor cares who. *Acts.* 9. *who art thou Lrod?*

2 As thus ignorance miſleads a mans whol courſe that it ſucceds not, ſo it perverts the power of all means that they profit not, miſapplies al the means he hath, and ſo ſpoyles them and his own peace and comfort alſo inſomuch that his corruptions grow more ſtrong and incorporated into him and he more unwilling to part with them, and thats the fruit of ignorance; the promiſes and comforts of the Goſpel which do not apper-

tain to him, he catcheth greedily at them, as a portion provided for himself, and goes away with that dream, and swels unmeasurably with presumption and self-confidence; *Are not al the Congregation holy?* what needs this severing and differencing of men? what are these who would be the only Saints? are not we al sinners, and Christ dyed for such and for us as wel as for them? the threatnings and curses which the Lord denounceth against the ungodly they cast them away with a fearless contempt, as such as do in no wise touch them or concern their particulars, and therefore should not trouble them; *tush say they we have made a league with death and a covenant with Hell, and when the destroying scourge passeth over, it shal not come near to them*, Isay. 28. 15. *yea they do commit evil, and yet say they are delivered by the Lord, Jer.* 7. Thus they grow secure and hard hearted, the wholsom counsels and directions of the word, which should be light unto their feet, and a discovery of al their failings, they slight the exact attendance thereunto as that which God wil not exact at their hands, because *in many things we sin al*, and so become careless or negligent as though they should not answer, and the Lord would not exact what they cannot do. Its with an ignorant sinner in the midst of all means as with a sick man remaining in an Apothecaries shop, ful of choycest Medicines in the darkest night: though there be the choycest af all receipts at hand, and he may take what he needs, yet because he cannot see what he takes, and how to use them, he may kill himself or encrease his distempers, but never cure any disease: so here with an ignorant person, he enjoyes al means, and yet abuses them, he may encrease his corruptions, but not reform them, his heart grows more hard, and his corruptions more strong, but he cannot in reason expect any help.

Use. 1. Hence we learn by way of Instruction: *An ignorant heart is a naughty heart, whether out of blindness they do*

do not, or out of prophaneſs they will not underſtand, and look into their eſtates. He that never ſaw his ſin aright, he never yet ſaw good day, nor the leaſt appearance of any ſaving work of Gods grace in his ſoul, yea he is ſo far from attaining ſuch a condition, that in truth he is not in the way to it. We will go no further than the conſideration of the former truth, and then let thy Conſcience be judg in the caſe propounded. Suppoſe then thou ſhouldeſt hear a diſtreſſed creature under the terror of his Conſcience freely and ingeniouſly lay open his condition unto thee. The day is yet to dawn and the hour yet to come, that ever he was touched with any ſence of ſinful rebellions, never yet Godly ſorrow came into my ſoul, nor remorſe into my Conſcience for al my many miſcarriages before God and men, wounds of Conſcience, burdens of ſpirit, and brokenneſs of heart for our daily departures and provocations they are wonders and riddles. I have heard of ſuch diſpoſitions, but am a ſtranger to the having of the leaſt work that way. I appeal to thy own Conſcience, what wouldeſt thou think of ſuch a party, who thus confeſſeth, and is as he confeſſeth? me thinks I hear thee anſwering, and thy heart ſhaking before thou giveſt it, What! ſenceleſs of his ſin! how fearful is his eſtate! Where there is no ſence, there can be no ſorrow, no repentance, therefore no Chriſt, nor pardon, nor Salvation, for *unleſs ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Never broken, God will never bind, ſo far from being good that he is not yet in the way to receive any good. Wo unto him that hath thus ſinned, and thus continues. Oh poor ignorant Creature thine own mouth hath condemned thee, thou haſt paſt ſentence againſt thine own ſoul, thou never hadſt a true ſight of thy ſins, therefore thou couldeſt never have a true ſence of them, or ſorrow for them; thou never hadeſt a ſound apprehenſion, thou canſt not have a through contrition for them. It came not near thy heart to break it, when it never touched it in

Truth, nay, it never was within thy ken to see it in a right manner: See yet thy misery further in enlarged these several Degrees following:

There is no evil thou canst prevent, no good thou canst receive, no mercy thou canst expect: and when thou hast looked sadly upon these, thou wilt have thy load.

1. *Liable thou art to all the hazards that Devils can devise or intend, men endeavor, or thy self deserve.* A blind man is subject to all kind of injurious dealings from the feebleſt persons, yea, from Children; plot they may, he cannot perceive; do they may, he cannot avoid. It is so with an ignorant person in his Spiritual condition, he is a prey to his sins, and a spoyl in the hands of Satan that catcheth him at his pleasure, and carrieth him headlong and hood-winked to everlasting destruction, every snare entraps him, allurement intangles him, temptation foils him; he can see nothing, prevent nothing, but goes like an Ox to the slaughter, and a Fool to the stocks, and knows nothing: Nay, were there no Devils to tempt thee, thou wouldest run into all evils of thine own accord. An ignorant heart like a blind man, stumbles at every block, fals into every ditch, yea, rusheth with greedines to the practice of the most hellish evils: It was the Jews case, out of ignorance they chose *Barabbas a Murderer*, and rejected *the Lord of Life*; they were violent to take away his blood, that came to take away their sins, and this out of ignorance; for so our Savior in his prayer, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34. *He that walks in darkneß, knows not whither he goes*, though he go to Hell; 1 *John*, 2. 11.

2. *There is no good he can receive from any means remaining in this blindneß.* Counsels do not take place, Mercies cannot perswade, Judgments, Threatnings do no awaken, Admonitions, Exhortation are of no force, they are beyond the reach of all these, they cannot come at

at them, therefore cannot work upon them, But as in ſome deſperate diſeaſes when they are come to the greateſt extremity, as in a Quinſie, when it hath ſwelled beyond meaſure, that ſpeaking and ſwallowing are wholly hindred, each man that ſees will eaſily conceive, and conclude, Alas, he is but a dead man, he can take nothing, therefore it's not poſſible he can continue. The Diſeaſe indeed is curable, but how ſhould his Phyſick cure him, or his Diet nouriſh him, if he can take neither, there is no good to be expected, to be done, when he can take nothing that can do him good. So it is in the ſoul, ignorance ſtops the paſſage of the power and work of al Gods Ordinances: There is no corruption, but the means are mighty through God to relieve, if they could be taken; were the heart proud, if the Word were received and welcomed, it would humble it; if ſtubborn, it would meeken and calm it; if unclean, it would purge it. But ignorance ſtops al the paſſages, intercepts the work of the Word, the underſtanding conceives it not, and the heart cannot profit by it, nor be bettered therewith.

3. *There is no Mercy thou canſt expect*: And this is able to ſplit a mans heart and hopes in irrecoverable diſcouragements; for though our endeavors prevail not, means proſper not, yet mercy can outbid both, and relieve beyond both; but if mercy ſuffer thee to be blinded, mercy wil ſuffer thee to be damned. It's Gods own reſolution expreſſed, *Iſai.* 27. 11. *They are a people that have no underſtanding, therefore he that made them, will not ſave them*, nay, he will ſhew *no mercy* to them. It's the determination, he hath ſetled as a concluſion beyond controul, *Hoſ.* 4. 14. *The people that do not underſtand, ſhall periſh*; It's the laſt execution he will put forth, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8. *He will come in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to them that know him not.* They are the mark in the firſt place, againſt which the fierceſt of his fury expreſſeth it ſelf. They that wil not now

now see their sins by the word, they shall be forced to see them, and to look them over by the flames of Hell-fire at the day of Judgment.

Use, 2. Hence again it follows: *To be hard to be convicted is a dangerous sin, and a dreadful curse to the party that is tainted with such a disposition of spirit.* We wil go no further than the Doctrine delivered, and that will give in undeniable evidence to both parts of the collection:

I. 1 *To be hard to be convinced, is a dangerous sin*; and that more waies than one.

1. *He sins against his own soul*; the happiness and peace of it as being accessary, and that in a special manner, to his own everlasting ruine, and imbrewed his hands in his own blood as it were; when the helps that God hath appointed, provided, and now also presents before him, and puts into his hands, he willingly, yea wilfully rejects, refuseth the use of them, and opposeth the work of them, and so consequently his spiritual good that might come thereby. When the Patient out of sullenness, and waywardness of spirit, refuseth the Physick or Diet provided for his good; at last Nature becomes so low, that he is utterly disenabled to take it, and so is starved and famished, each man concludes, he was accessary to his own death. So when God hath sent his faithful Servants to admonish thee, his Ministers to convince that gainsaying Spirit of thine, to ransack the corruption of thy cankered Conscience, so that the core might have been searched, and thy distempers healed. Who knows what good might have been wrought, what benefit thou mightest have received, hadst thou but suffered and received the helps provided for that end; which when thou diddest oppose, and not suffer thy self to be convinced, thou didst oppose thine own everlasting welfare, and therefore art guilty of thine own blood, *Luke*, 7. 30. *The Publicans and sinners justified God, and were baptized; but the Scribes and Pharisees rejected*

jected the Counsel of God against themselves, i. e. against their own good and happiness. Yea, so the Apostle to the gainsaying Corinthians, when he had disputed long, and manifested the Truth in the cleer evidence of it, *Acts*, 18. 14. and they gainsayed still, *and blasphemed, he shook his rayment in sign of distast and indignation, and said, your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean*, he was innocent. And so one day thou wilt be forced to confess, and to cleer the innocency and faithfulness of Gods Servants, I was the cause of my confusion, my own wayward gainsaying Spirit, else I might have been recovered; they did their duty with much painfulness, but my perverse spirit would not receive that counsel, which would have directed and comforted me, but now condemns me. So *Paul* to the contradicting Jews, *Acts*, 13. 46. *Because ye put away the Word, and judg your self unworthy of eternal life*: thou wilt then be forced to yield it, I am unworthy that ever the Promises of the Gospel should establish my heart who would not be convinced of the goodness of them, unworthy that ever the Gospel should be the savor of life to me, who have cast it behind my back as unsavory Salt.

He sins against the Ordinances, the Faithfulness, Truth, and free Grace of God therein revealed and dispensed for his everlasting good; he casts all these behind his back, and out of a slight neglect wil not give the least entertainment thereunto. This quarrelling disposition, like a squeazy stomach, spils the Physick when he cannot endure to take it, flings away the dainties provided when he is not willing, nor hath not a heart or appetite to feed on them; and how hainous this contempt is, the Apostle intimates, *Hebrews*, 2. 3. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* 2.

It sins against Gods Spirit in a more than ordinary manner; he would seem in his gainsaying frame to try masteries with the Lord, and in the highest strain of rebellion 3.

bellion, to conteſt with the Almighty Spirit of Chriſt in the utmoſt defyance, as refuſing to yield in the leaſt appearance, I call it the higheſt ſtrain of rebellion to try Maſteries with the Almighty, and that may be thus obſerved.

When our Savior was to leave the world, and to go to Heaven to poſſeſs the glory he had with the Father before all worlds, he comforts the hearts of his Diſciples touching his departure with the Conſideration of the incomparable benefit that would accrew therefrom, *John*, 16. 7. *It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come, but if I depart I will ſend him*, that is, the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus would not diſpenſe the powerful work of his Grace in ſuch an abundant meaſure, unleſs he aſcended unto the Throne of his Grace; for the largeneſs of the diſpenſation thereof, and that in reaſon until that time, *The Spirit was not yet given, becauſe Chriſt was not yet glorified*, John, 7. 39. *When he aſcended up on high, he then gave gifts unto men even for the Rebellious*, Eph. 4. 8. And herein appears the powerful diſpenſation of his Grace, and operation of his Spirit, then when the Comforter is come, he ſhal convince the world of ſin, he ſhal ſet down the Conſciences of the Sons of men in the ſight of their vileneſs and guilt: This is as it were the Maſter-piece of the work of the Spirit, when he is ſent from Heaven, from the Father and the Son with full Commiſſion and Power, from our Savior, advanced to the higheſt pitch of ſupreameſt excellency of his Kingly, Prophetical, and Prieſtly Offices, and that for this end in the firſt place as the prime and hardeſt work to convince the world of ſin: Now to gainſay and contradict this Spirit in this Work, for which he hath received this Commiſſion, is to conteſt for Maſteries with the Almighty, *Heb.* 12. 25. *If they eſcaped not who refuſed* Moſes *who ſpake on Earth, how ſhall we eſcape if we refuſe him that ſpeaks from Heaven?* And this is the higheſt

higheſt ſtrayn of rebellion, when a mnn wil not give way nor yield in the leaſt but ſhut out this authority of the ſpirit from having any entertainment, even in the ſuburbs, in our apprehenſions and underſtandings, while we continue in this gainſaying frame; there wants nothing but light and malice to make it the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Here is the hainouſneſs of the ſin;

See the Curſe of it that is dreadful. II.

Thou makeſt way for Satan in the means which are appointed by God to oppoſe him John 13. 27. *The Devil entred into* Judas *with a ſopp*, ſo he enters with an admonition and counſel while thou doeſt oppoſe that truth which ſhould help thee againſt his power and ſubtilty, but yieldeſt thy ſelf fully to be poſſeſſed by both, Thou wilt not be guided by the counſel of God, therfore thou ſhalt be couſened by the deluſions of the Devil. 1.

Chriſt in his righteous dealings and according to thy juſt deſervings delivers thee up to the power of Satan, whenas thou waſt willing to yeild up thy ſelf to his poſſeſſion, *So Paul.* 1. *Tim.* 3. 20. *delivers* Hymenœus *and* Philetus *unto Satan*, and in Church diſcipline obſtinacy in the leaſt evil, is anſwerable to the greateſt offence, becauſe by that means the ſoul ſhakes off the authority of the Lord Jeſus, and ſo is to be caſt out. 2.

Becauſe thou haſt gainſayed his diſpenſations, *he wil have no more dealing with thee* Math. 23. laſt. *you ſhal ſee me no more.* He wil paſs by and not ſpeak with thee, He wil inſtruct others, admoniſh others, but he wil counſel thee no more, reprove thee no more. He wil not change a word with thee in the Aſſemblies, *My ſpirit ſhal not alwayes ſtrive*, *Gen.* 6. 3. That ſpirit which thou haſt reſiſted and oppoſed ſhal ſtir in thee and ſtrive with thee no more, thou wouldeſt not ſee, thou ſhalt not ſee therefore; thou wouldeſt not have thy conſcience ſtirred it ſhal be feared therefore. 3.

4. Reader pray hard against a hard heart

Thou art every day ripening for ruine, and reserved in the chayns of darkness til the judgment of the great day. and therefore thy condition is like that of the Devil himself, thou hast only the liberty of thy chain, that is, liberty to encrease thy sins and thy plagues. when the Lord would prepare a people for destruction he layes *Isa.* 6. 10. he eals them up under the curse of a blind mind and a hard heart. *Hear ye indeed but understand not, and see yee indeed but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and shut their eyes lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart and convert and be healed.*

Use, 3. Pray for spiritual Instruction

O Instruction, why men of the greatest ability for depth of brain and strength of understanding are most hardly brought to brokennes of heart and to be wounded with Godly sorrow for their sins; the ground is from the point in hand, because they are hardest brought to see their sins; the power of carnal reason doth so mightily prevayl in them being now in their natural condition, the strength of their abilities becomes wholly perverted to their own hurt, and the maintaining of their own distempers, their subtilty deceives themselves & they abuse the sharpnes of their wit to beat back the authority of the truth and to wind away from the evidence of argument that is presented to their view. They shut out the light of the truth from coming into their hearts. and therefore its not possible it should work upon them kindly or effectually prevail with them for God. Hence that peremptory determination of the Apostle *not many wise men after the flesh* 1. Cor. 1. 26. because *the wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God.* Rom. 8. 7. when it is as a weapon in the hand and under the command of our fleshly hearts, It fortifies most strongly against the evidence and efficacy of the truth, will not suffer a conviction to fasten upon the Conscience, and therefore no Godly sorrow to affect the soul of a sinner. As it is in war when the trenches and outworks are slight,

and

and the wal of the City low, and the Castle weak, its no matter of danger or difficulty for a wise Commander with competent forces to surprise it, to carry the place, and Conquer the people their defence was but feeble, but were their out-works strong, their walls high, the Citadel and Castle impregnable, it wil abide many assaults and stand out long, even against the greatest power that shal besiege them, and happily be forced to raise the siege and forsake the place as not able to prevail. It is so in our spiritual condition, when the Lord coms to lay siege to the soul of a sinful creature who is now under the power of darkness, and the soveraign command of his corruptions which rule as supream Lords over him: There is no Conversion without Conviction (as hath been shew'd in opening the point) Its not possible the heart should be content to leave sin unless the understanding clearly see the loathsomness of it, the out-works and walls of the soul are our apprehensions and understanding, now where there is wilness, depth and subtilty of wit, large reaches of carnal reason, these the Apostle calls *strong holds*. 2. *Cor.* 10. 4. and they wil abide the battery and force of the most plain evidences, strongest arguments that can be devised and alleadged with the best skil, and yet hold it out against all. where the opposition is not so strong the entrance is more easy, and subjection is sooner yielded to the evidence of the truth. This is the ground the prophet gives of that invincible stiffness, pride, and contempt of Babilon, as being unreachable under al dispensations, *Thy wisdom and thy knowledg they have perverted thee, or caused thee to rebell*, Isa. 47. 10. It was the reason of that stubbornness of which the Lord complains in the Scribes and Pharisees the great Rabbies of the world. *Luke.* 7. 30. 31. *the Publicans and sinners Glorified God because of John Baptists doctrine*, and so yielded themselves and were ove[r] of the evidence of the truth. *but the Scribes an[d]*

rises rejected the counsel of God. They put it by and would not suffer the counsel of God to take place or to prevail with them. *Paul* never found worse entertainment and greater opposition than at *Corinth*, and *Athens*, the Mart of sciences and Store-house of learning and learned men, the excellency of whose parts and the conceit of learning and wisdom did so transport them, and puffe up their earthly minds, that they slighted the simplicity that was in Christ and trampled upon the meanes of the Gospel, *Acts.* 17. 18. *The Philosophers of the Epicure and Stoicks they encountred Paul and said what will this babler say? and v.* 32. *some mocked*; As though the rest of the meaner sort, though they had no heart to receive the Gospel yet they had no skil to resist, or were able, and therefore durst not grapple with his arguments. These only who had more learning, they gave the encounter, and openly contemned both his purpose and doctrine, As it is with men who are but weak and unskilful at the weapon, not able to latch a blow or put by a thrust, it's no hard matter to get within them, but those who are masters of defence are dextrous, and handy at their weapons, there is little hope to hit them or to come within them. So here, men of meaner capacities and of shallow reach, they yield more easily and are forced to let fal their weapons, but such who are skilful are masters of defence, can devise devices, the subtilty of their own reason is furthered by Satans suggestions, they wil latch allmost any blow, and put by the plainest truth for the present push, that there is no hope to come in to them. And this also is the ground why your painted Formalists, and subtil hypocrites who are grown cunning in the craft of profession, (for so they make it) they are so hardly brought on to beleeve. Publicans and sinners and Harlots shal goe before them. And for this it is our Lord to marvailously distasts this condi-

Rev. 3. 17. *I would thou were either cold or hot*

hot, Lukewarmnes is worse than prophanneſs, not that falſe ſhewes are worſe than groſſer evils when heart and life, outſide and inſide are both ill, but intruth becauſe ſuch are more difficult to be convinced of their evils, and therefore not likely to be amended or brought out of them q. d. As though the Lord had ſayed if thou wert openly naught, thou mighteſt be brought to ſee & acknowledg thy naughtineſs; Here *Paul* iſſues the ſtrength of that reſiſtance againſt the Lord and his Goſpel 1. *Coloſſ.* 21. *Enemies in your minds by wicked works.* but in the original, *Enemies by reaſon of your diſcourſes, ſet or attent to evil works.* It's the firſt ſtep to wiſdom *to become a fool*, and thats hard to him that is highly in love with his own wit.

Beware
thy own
Wisdom

Uſe, 4.

Examination: we may hence gain certain evidence whether ever the Lord hath made any entrance upon this great work of preparation and ſo any expreſſion of his purpoſe effectually to call us to himſelf to this day or no. happily the Lord Chriſt hath been knocking oft at thy dore as he paſſeth by in the diſpenſation of his Ordinances in the wayes of his providence in which he hath walked towards thee, hath called in upon thy Conſcience, preſented the guilt of thy ſins and layd heavy things to thy charge, and knocked hard at thy dore, *awake thou that ſleepeſt*, ſo that thou haſt heard a confuſed noyſe as it were that made thee a little to look about, but hath the Lord ever lifted up the latch as though he were reſolved to come in? hath he layd hold upon and begun to grapple with that Graceleſs heart of thine and held this light of diſcovery of ſin to thy mind as to conſtrayn thee to look wiſhly upon it indeed to ſee it clearly and convictingly according to that which hath formerly been ſpoken? Know and conclude thou maieſt, thou art in the right way, and the Lord begins to deal with thee as he doth with thoſe that he intends good unto. But art thou a ſtranger to theſe diſpenſations of the Lord and tradings with thy mind and

Pray to
Lord to
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and heart? Thou mayest indeed have notice and hear a rumor of Christ passing by and the excellency of his Grace, but of any purpose of making his abode with thee, thou never couldst have the least inkling thereof unto this day.

Quest. *How then shall we know whether we fall short of this true sight of sin or no?*

Answ. We will take both Particulars mentioned, into Consideration, that so we may take a true scantling of our own estate, and track the Footsteps and Impressions of the work of the Spirit upon our souls. I will touch the first in a word, and entreat more largely upon the Second, to wit, Touching the convicting sight of sin, because there lies the life and stress of this Doctrine.

I. If then we see sin cleerly, naked, and in it's own Nature, namely, this resistance and opposition against God as the greatest evil of al other: It wil thus be discerned, *This sight will keep the heart in cold blood from careless adventuring upon the commission of sin.* You must stil remember my purpose is not to dispute of sanctifying knowledg, or to give in evidence of that, for we are in this place to look at that light that is let in in this preparative work, and this first Branch of it, which how far it may go, or whether it can agree to an Hypocrite, I will not now dispute, that only I wil infer from it, is beyond exception; That in *cold blood*, i. e. Take such a man out of the hurry of a Temptation, when he is himself not drunk with some overbearing distemper, for then he knows not where he is, or what he doth, and therefore may adventure to do any thing, but when a sinner is come to himself, and the sight of his sin as before disputed, it wil suffer him *carelesly to adventure* upon the Commission of that which appears such in his own apprehension, even the greatest evil of all. The dreadfulness then of this duty apprehended, wil drive the soul to a stand, and stop the sinner in his proceeding, that he dare as well eat his flesh,

fleſh, and take a Lyon by the claw, and a Bear by the tooth, as to have his hand in that which is the heavieſt plague of all in his own Judgment. There is no man living, but as he hath ſomthing which he prizeth as the chief good, in which his ſoul takes content, ſo the loſs of that, or that which is contrary to that, he looks at as the moſt unſupportable evil that can betide him. That the Soldier ſhould take the lye or challenge, and have the contempt of cowardice put upon him, and ſit ſtil, and not ſeek to revenge the wrong as he conceives it, he cannot bear it. That the covetous yong man ſhould *ſel his poſſeſſions, and part with all to the poor*, it is ſuch an unſufferable loſs, he will rather part with Heaven, the very hearing of it makes his heart heavy, and *himſelf to go away ſorrowful*, Mat. 19. 22. Yea, that which Nature hath made dear to all, to ſee death before a man, and danger ſuch as will undoubtedly hazard the loſs of life; how do we fear the thought of it fly the ſight, avoid the occaſion of it? didſt thou ſee thy ſins and the helliſh reſiſtance of thy heart againſt God to be a greater evil than al theſe? didſt thou really judg them ſuch, beleeve them (as the men of *Niniveh* did *Jonahs* threatning, *Jonah*, 3. 5.) to be ſuch? It's certain it would amaze thy heart, that thou wouldeſt be as loth to ruſh into evil, as thou wouldeſt be to run upon a Spears point, or caſt thy ſelf into the mouth of the Lyon to be torn in pieces. Take a rebellious ſinner beſet with the horror of his Conſcience, ſo that he ſees Hell gaping for him, and the Devils ready to ſeize upon that helliſh heart of his, how loaths he then the leaſt appearance of thoſe corruptions, the evil of which he ſees in the puniſhment only? how tender is he to avoid the occaſion of them? When the evil of thy puniſhment is now over and out of mind, didſt thou but know that reſiſtance and rebellion of thy heart againſt God, his Grace, his Spirit, his Truth aright, as greater than all thoſe evils, and is now preſent with thee, thou wouldſt be ſo far fearful not heedleſly to adventure upon

upon the practice of it. *When* Judas *ſaw whether his Covetouſneß had brought him, he flung away his thirty pieces*, Matth. 27. 3. And it's certain, all the Scribes and Phariſees in the Synagogue, and all the money in the Country of *Judea*, could not have prevailed with him had they been then tendred to him; much more had he ſeen the reſiſtance had been a greater evil than the vengeance that did befal, *Acts*, 19. 16. 19. *When the evil ſpirit prevailed againſt the ſeven Sons of* Sceva, *fear fell on them all, and many of them had uſed curious Arts, brought their books together, and burnt them before them all.* When the hearts of theſe Converts were pricked, and they craved Counſel what they ſhould do, *Peter* amidſt many other Counſels which he ſuggeſted, adds this, verſe 40. *Save your ſelves from this crooked generation*; You that are in *Parthia*, *Meſopotamia*, *Phrygia*, *Galatia*, you are amongſt many profeſſed Enemies to the Lord Chriſt & his Truth, therefore ſave your ſelves from their Society, and verſe 44. *They came and abode together, and ſold their goods and parted them as every one had need.*

Hearken to this you diſobedient Children and rebellious Servants, who have the Commands of Parents and Maſters, Counſels of Servants and Neighbors dayly ſuggeſted and preſſed upon you; liſten to this you heedleſs Profeſſors, who have the Word and Precepts of God dayly publiſhed in your Ears, and proclaimed in your hearing, and you go away informed, convinced, and the heart cannot gainſay but it ought to ſtoop, your carriages ſhould not be wayward, your words ſharpiſh, your behaviors uncomely: and yet you dare, you do heedleſly, careleſly adventure at the next time and turn upon the ſame ſins; you may talk what others ſay by rote, and profeſs in words that ſin is the greateſt evil of al, but in truth you never ſaw ſin to this day, much leſs ſaw it to be the greateſt evil of al. A little evil, were it but the loſs of ſo much of thy blood by ſtripes, or the

loſs

loss of so much money, were thou punished in thy purse for such wretchlessness, they would cause thee to set thy mind, and heart, and hand to thy work, the loss of thy life, and soul, and Heaven, and God, and all would prevail more with thee; but in truth thou never yet knewest what the loss of these meant, and therefore not what thy sin is that brings the loss of all.

Take Notice Lere

Thus much for the light of sin clearly; come we now to enquire of the second, AND HERE MAKE WE PRVIY SEARCH WHO THEY BE THAT SEE SIN CONVICTINGLY, by the Evidence of the former Doctrine, and that will be an help against four sorts of Persons, whose Practice gives undeniable proof, that they fall short of this Illumination of God aright, they never found this Work upon their minds.

The first are such, Who are unwilling to come within the Rule and discovery of the Truth, that will lay open unto them loathsom corruptions, which are yet beloved, and lodge too near the heart. If he might have his will, he would not meet with that Truth that would meet with his Courses, whereby he gives his sensual Spirit exceeding great content; unwilling to hear that to be an evil, which he is unwilling to reform; loth that such and such either dispositions or carriages should be condemned as wicked, which he is loth to part withal; he loves not to have this or that to be a Rule, or a Duty, and yet he fears it will prove so, and therefore desires not to hear of it, lest he should be forced to practise it: and therefore he is most at ease when he is least within the sight, and call, and command of such Truths which he knows do so narrowly and deeply concern him: and therefore he deals in this case with the Dispensations of the Word, as men use to do that are in debt and danger of Law and Creditors; they fly the Country when they know the under Sheriff hath any Writ out against them, or else betake themselves to some Priviledge place, where

they may be freed from the Arrest of the Officer. So these labor to be there where the Truth in reason is not likely to exercise any jurisdiction, they willingly desire to be without the reach of it, and therefore willing to live in such places under such Ministries where their Consciences may not be troubled, their hearts and waies searched, and they brought to yield subjection by an overpowering hand. And here sometimes it comes to this, and that by the confession of their own mouths, when God hath broke in upon their hearts, that they have been afraid to be in the company of such men that they suspected would either convince and cal to such practices, or yet to come to the Congregations while such Truths were in scanning and consideration: Or as a Formal Knight once professed (in the Country from whence we came) he would not come to the Assembly until the Minister had made an end of such a Text. Thus *Ahabs* Spirit was carried towards *Micaiah*, when al his Trencher Chaplains, the false Prophets, had dressed a Dish on purpose to fit his tooth and turn, had brought in a Verdict that they knew would please his humor, and content his carnal desire; *Jehosaphat* in simplicity of heart, that he might indeed in sincerity seek after the mind and counsel of God, enquires, *Is there here any Prophet of the Lord that we might enquire of him?* He answered, *There is none but one* Micaiah, *and I hate him, for he never propheſieth good, but evil to me*, 1 Kings, 22. 8. He did not suit his humor, nor please his pallat, therefore he was not willing to hear that from him, that happily he should be unwilling to do. So they in *Isaiahs* time, they would give the Prophet his Text, and tel him what Points he should handle also; *They said to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, propheſie not right things; propheſie smooth things:* Isai. 30. 10. And so dealt those fast-hearted Hearers with our Savior, when he pressed Spiritual and searching Truths upon them, *they were not able to digest*

gest them; this is a hard saying, who can hear it, and from that time saies the Text many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him, John, 6. 66. and hence it is persons of this temper are most pleased when their sins or duties are discovered in some general discourses, because they then suppose they may creep away in the croud, and their particular either conditions or corruptions will not be attached, and they and them brought to the tryal; but when it comes to meet with him in the narrow, and touch him in his particular, these persons begin to storm, *Acts*, 7. 51, 52. they heard *Stephen* quietly rip up the rebellious carriages of the Jews; but when he came home to their doors, and held the Candle to their Eyes, and gave in special Evidence to convince them also, they were not able to endure it: *Ye stiff-necked and hard-hearted as your Fathers, so do ye; they were Slayers of the Prophets, and you the betrayers and murderers of the just one; when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their Teeth, &c.*

Beware Reader how you do not despise close — Preach —

2. If yet the Truth will come in upon them, and the light will shine in their faces that it cannot be avoided, if they cannot prevent the seeing of it, *then they fall to gainsaying*, they strive mightily to stop the passage of the Truth, and to darken the evidence of it, to take off the edg and force of that which they conceive will fall most heavily upon them, and constrain them to alter their course, and lay down those distempers they are very loth to leave, *Acts*, 18. 6. *They opposed themselves.* They deal with the Truth as subtil Lawyers do with a good Cause, when the strength of it is such that they are not able to withstand, they labor to hide the Point of the Argument, and to hide that wherein the stress of the Cause lies, and fal hotly upon some bye business, or else deal most in those things which are most probable, but indeed do not touch the Point. So a Spirit that is not willing to be convinced, he will endea-

vor to decline the strength of an Argument, and look least to that where the truest and the weight of the Rule or Duty lies that most concerns him, or his course, when he sees the stream and force of Reason coming in upon him, he will hinder or interrupt the delivery of it, and turn it another way, or raise some blinds, and cast in some words, like the putting out of the light, or if not hinder the observation, yet take off the attendance and consideration of it. He will get off from that as soon as may be, he will not stay there where the strength of the conviction lies, but seek in many Objections, start other Considerations, that so he may decline the Argument, and hinder the power of the Truth that might prevail with him. *Thus* Elymas the Sorcerer, *Acts*, 13. 10. when *Paul* and *Barnabas* had preached, and he labored to turn away the Deputy from the Faith. *Paul* thus speaks to him, *O full of all subtilty* (he had a sleight of hand to any wickedness) *why dost thou erook the straight wayes of the Lord.* He cast in many cavils, put in many suspicions and pretenses that he might not look at the simplicity of the Truth delivered. The word there used in the Original, implies a sleight of hand as we call it, when such wily spirits can turn themselves into all shapes, to turn by the evidence of the Truth; so many windings and turnings, so many wimblings of devices, so many outs and doubtings, that may bemist the manifest discovery of a Duty which ought to be done, or a sin that ought to be avoided, and so in conclusion loseth the Truth, and the benefit of it also, through God's just Judgment, and their own just deservings. So the Scribes dealt touching our Savior when he had cured the Eyes of the blind man, *John*, 9. they would have taken him off from the attendance to the work to have sighted the person of our Savior, *We know* (say they) *this man is a sinner, &c.* as it's said of a Fish called the *Sepia*, when the Fisher-man comes to follow her, she casts forth a kind of black humor with

with which she darkeneth the water; and puts him to a loss in his proceedings; whereas an honest heart that is willing so be convinced, he looks most at that where there is most light, and most strength, and is desirous to attend that which gives in greatest Evidence to overcome the heart. So *Ely* spake to *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 17. *hide nothing from me.* Job. 6. 24. *teach me and I will hold my tongue* he wil quietly hear al, and attend that most, which may carry the cause to his Conscience.

If yet the evidence of the truth be such that he cannot gainsay, his mouth is stopped and his reasons are spent he hath nothing to oppose, *there is a third distemper* which is as bad if not worse than the two former, *A restlesness of spirit to raise new brabbles and quarrels against the determination of the truth, which formerly he could not resist.* When he is caught and held in the strength of Argument, is taken captive and prisoner, he would fain rescue himself with a restless jangling; he sees more, and can say more though no man else can see it, nor he make good what he pretends. He cannot answer yet wil not yield, cannot maintain his conceits yet wil not forsake them. As Lawyers they'l bring the cause about again, and have a fresh hearing in this and that Court; the reasons are the same, and were answered before yet he brings them over again and just in the place where he was, his arguments are at an end. if his spirit were so, but there is more in it (he saies) and he cannot see through it, and yet cannot tell how to prove his own argument or answer anothers, these spirits are like quicksilver which yet no man hath attained any skil to fix, so the Rulers, Elders, and Scribes when they knew not how to dash the Glory of the Gospel, and the powerful dispensation thereof mark how restlesly the venome of their spirits transported them against reason, *Acts.* 4. 15. 16. 17. *they communed amongst themselves saying what shal we do to these men,*

for

for that indeed a notable Miracle hath been done by them is manifeſt to all men, and we cannot deny it, but let us ſtraightly charge them that they ſpeak no more in this name, when in reaſon they ſhould have inferred we cannot deny the Miracle and ſo not the truth, let us not deny the liberty to ſpeak, ſo they in *John* 9. 24. when it was apparent Chriſt had cured the man, wrought the Miracle, and ſo gained honour in the heart of the man, therefore they had fiſhed up and down to weaken that, and it would not do; It appeared he was blind, (to his parents) that Chriſt had cured him, ſo himſelf affirmed; then they come to this, give *God the praiſe we know this man is a ſinner*. But what is that to the purpoſe *or how know they that?* he anſwered *whether he be a ſinner or no I know not, one thing I know whereas I was blind he hath opened my eyes*; and this was to the purpoſe, *Then ſaid they what did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes, I have told you already &c.* they are upon the ſame hinges not ſtirred a haires breadth Here are no reaſons but only wreſtlings of ſtomack, we are *Moſes* Diſciples but this fellow we know not whence he is.

4. If it be ſo that al theſe deviſes againſt the truth ſerve not his turn *in the fourth place he ſets himſelf againſt the truth* he cares not for argument, but he wil ſtand againſt the truth, and then God in his juſt judgment leaves him, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 18. *he gave them up to ſtrong deluſions that they might believe lyes that they might be damned, becauſe they received not, but oppoſed the truth* thus it was with *Balaam Numb.* 24. 1 he went out not as formerly but reſolved to Curſe *Iſrael* whether God would or no, *and this is to hold down the truth in unrighteouſneſs*, *Rom.* 1. 18. I told you before that in Conviction, when the heart is throughly Convicted, it lies ſtil under the work of God, but here the heart oppoſes the word of God. *Exo.* 10. 28. ſaies *Pharaoh* to *Moſes* get thee out of my ſight, the day thou

ſeeſt

ſeeſt my face thou ſhalt die, *Moſes* ſaies, *I wil ſee thy face no more*, but God ſends to him and kills his firſt born and afterwards drownes himſelf; It's certain that if the truth followes a man home to his beloved ſin, if he be a dog he wil ſnarl againſt it, and reſolve to keep his ſin. *Jer.* 44. 16. 17. as the proud men there ſaid, *as for the word of the Lord thou haſt ſpoken to us, we wil not hearken unto thee*; and if a man goes thus far he is very neer to the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and if ever God bring him home to himſelf it is by ſome ſtrange judgments.

Use. 5. *Exhortation to provoke the deſires and quicken the endeavors of al that have heard or read the doctrin delivered & opened to lay out their labour & that unto the utmoſt of all their abilities never to give the Lord reſt, nor reſt unto their own ſouls, before they get this true ſight of ſin, if ever they hope to ſee the work of Gods Grace in their hearts here in this world, or to ſee the face of God in Glory, in that other world that is to come.* Bretheren let not Satan deceive you, nor ſuffer your ſelves ſo far to be deluded as to dream of another courſe or to deviſe a ſhorter cut to Grace and Glory, for its certain if you do, you wil fal ſhort of your hopes and Comforts and all. This is the way that God hath appointed and he wil bleſs, the order which he hath ſet in his infinite wiſdom and which he wil proſper. If you would find his bleſſing walk in his way, if you expect ſucceſs attend his order and direction which he hath left to bring us to his Chriſt, and ſo to life and happineſs. If you ſee not your ſins you are in hazard never to ſee good day while you live nor when you dye. Chriſt is ſaid *to ſtand at the dore and knock, and if any man* wil open unto him, he wil come in and ſupp with him, *Rev.* 3. 20. Saving Contrition is a ſhooting back the boults of out baſe luſts, a ſevering and unlocking the heart from the Soveraignty of ones noyſom Corruptions, that ſtop the paſſage and hinder the coming

ing of our Saviour; this clear and convicting sight of our sins, is as it were the lifting up of the latch, or letting in of the Key, the powerful dispensation of the truth and operation of his spirit whereby the knot and combination between sin and the soul is broken and severed, and the way made that the authority of the truth may come at the heart and work kindly upon it for good. An error here in the entrance is hardly ever recovered to miss here is mervailous dangerous, it spoyles our whol proceeding in the great work of our calling and everlasting comfort as the naturalliſt and Physitian observe an error in the first concoction is never recovered in the second, for the Lord in his wisdom and the course of nature hath so ordayned, that each part doth that which is its proper and peculiar work but doth not rectify or redress that which was done amiss by another, and to the goodness of the nourishment is never recovered or the body strengthened or health so comfortably preserved herby as were to be desired. So it is in the entrance of this great work of preparation for Christ and our effectual bringing home unto him, never see sin aright, the soul cannot be affected with it in a right manner, never truly see the need of a Savior, never seek after him or come to him; this through sight of sin is as it were the setting open of the window whereby the light and good of the truth, and the loathsomness of sin is laid open unto the soul, and comes in a main upon the Conscience to prevayl with it whereas shut this window and stop this passage, the soul is cooped up in the dungeon of darkness and delusion, be the ordinances never so powerful the means never so effectual there is no coming into the heart, no hope to work upon it or to prevail with it for good; the evil of sin is not acknowledged, and therefore not prevented, that which his reason cannot see, a man cannot shun, the excellency and necessity of a Christ is not discerned and therefore not endeavoured after as were meet. It befalls the

the ſoul, ſmote with this ſpiritual blindneſs as with the Aſſyrian Hoſt when they came to ſurprize *Eliſha*, 2 Kings 18.19.20. *He prayed, Lord ſmite this people with blindneſs, & he did ſo and they ſaw nothing before they were in the midſt of their enemyes* ſo here, when the ſinner is miſguided by the dimneſs of his deluded mind he goes on in an evil way, and knowes not whither he goes, or where he is, before he be in the bottmleſs pit. Oh be wiſe and wary therefore that we err not here, leaſt we ruſh into ruine and that paſt all recovery. Expect then Gods bleſſing upon our endeavour but in Gods order, & attend his work in his own way. It is the aym of our Saviour in ſending, and the office of the Holy Ghoſt in coming into the world when he intends to work effectually the ſaving good of his people, to intitle them to the pardon of their ſins, and to eſtabliſh their hearts under the government of his ſpirit. *John.* 16. 7. 8. *If I depart I wil ſend the Comforter, and when he is come he wil reprove*, he wil convince, and ſet down the world by undeniable conviction *of ſin of righteouſneß, of judgment, of righteouſneß*, that the law is ſatiſfied, juſtice anſwered, and that fully, becauſe he that was in priſon is now releaſed, and therefore the debt payd, *and he gone* to heaven, *to his Father.* Of *judgment* the power of his Kingdom & government erected and ſet up in the ſoules of his ſervants and children, *in that by death he overcame him that had the power of death that is the Devill*, and therefore he is judged and falls in his cauſe as having no right nor in reaſon can challenge no rule in the hearts of thoſe, for whom Chriſt hath ſatiſfied divine juſtice, and therefore are free from that authority that ſin and Satan had of them thereby. But before we can ſhare either in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for our juſtification or the rule of his ſpirit in our Sanctification, the Holy Ghoſt muſt and doth *convince us of ſin*, that we have rejected and not entertained this Saviour. If we do not convictingly

ly see our sin in settling upon the root of our Corrupt rebellions and casting away the riches of Christs mercy & the rule of his Grace, its not possible that those spiritual benefits should ever be made ours. As ever therefore you desire to see and find the mercies of Christ sealed up unto your Consciences, in pardoning of sins and acceptation of your persons; As ever you would find the Kingdom of Satan cast down in your hearts, and the government of his Grace and spirit there set up; labor for this clear and convicting sight of sin, begin you where the Holy spirit begins that you may find his presence with you,& his effectual power and blessing to accompiny your endeavours in that way. Catch not disorderly at pardon, look not for peace of Conscience or hope to see the government of Christs Grace set up in your souls before you come to see your sins by convicting evidence of the Holy Ghost. The holy spirit of Grace wil not cross his course to gratify our Corruption. That I may further set on the exhortation, I shal endeavour to do these two things.

First, *To propound some means to help in this work.*

Secondly, *Some motives to quicken you therein.*

The means are these that follow.

Means 1. First, *Labor we to see that unconceivable excellency of holineß that is in the Lord, and search we into the scriptures and the righteous laws there recorded for the direction of our daily course*, and that wil make us see the loathsomness of our own hearts and the vileness of our sins. As its said of darkness, it cannot be seen by it self but its light that discovers it self and darkness; Its as true of sin, it is not by it self to be discerned, for it is spiritual darkness; the light of Gods Holiness and wisdom which by sin are wronged, and the law which is transgressed these are both lights, *God is light and in him is no darkneß*,, John. 1. 5. *The law is a light and the Commandement a lamp unto our feet*, Prov. 6. 23.

6. 23. And by the sight of both these we come to have a ful discerning of sin which is opposite to them both.

Our ignorance of God breeds the ignorance of our own hearts, and the hidden waies of wickedness, and the cunning conveyances of corrupt distempers which are there in *Psal.* 14. 1. 2. *The fool hath said in his heart there is no God*, and then it followes they are become abominable he makes bones of no sins at al; for herein lies the spiritualness or spiritual evil of sins and that hidden poyson and malignity of the corruption of our natures, that they justle professedly against the Almighty so far as he is pleased to communicate himself unto us in the waies of his Holiness and goodness. Thus the blasphemer is said *to pierce God by his oaths*, *Levit.* 24. 11. and the wicked are said to walk contrary to him, *Levit.* 26. *to resist him*, *to weary him*, *to load him*, while then we see not him whom we do oppose by our sins, no wonder that we neither see nor are sensible of the sins, by which we do oppose him. Whereas could we grope after the Almighty as the Apostle professeth we may, because *he is not far from any of us*, nay *in him we live and move in every* spiritual action of our minds and hearts. So that did but a wicked man, or could he perceive that in every thought of his mind, motion of his wil, stirring of any affection, that he did justle with the infinite Holiness and purity of the Lord, who meets with him in every action and motion of his mind and wil, It were able to sink the soul of a sinful creature, and make him sit down confounded in the sight of the loathsomness of his own wretched nature, as being wholly opposite to so infinite a good in all he is or doth; thus it was with *Job* when the Lord had schooled him out of the whirlwind, & discovered the surpassing excellency of his Glory to him, he puts him beyond al pleas of his own worth, *Job.* 40. 4. *Behold I am vile* yea more expressly he gives this as the reason of the discovery of his own wretchedness, I

have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine eye ſees thee, wherefore I abhor my ſelf in duſt and aſhes, Job, 42. 4. So it was with the Corinth who was convinced by the preaching of the Word, he ſaw God before he ſaw the ſecret vileneſs of his own heart preſented to his view, 1 *Cor.* 14. 24. *God is in you of a truth.* Search we into the holy Law of God, and examine our hearts and lives thereby, and ſee how far they ſtand guilty of the breach thereof; but view the compaſs of the Law, and what is vertually contained therein; for though the words are few, yet the things are many that are comprehended in them: And eſpecially look not at the Letter, but at the Spiritual Senſe and Mind of the Almighty in each thing there required, that the whol heart muſt cloſe with God and his Will, as the chiefeſt good; look at, and lift up his Glory as his laſt end in every duty we do, and that we make a breach in al thoſe particulars in every ſin we do commit: our heart is not with him, nor make we choyce of him, ſet not up his Name, but ſeek our own baſe ends thereby, and ſerve our ſelves, and not him.

By this narrow ſearch, and dayly obſervation of our dayly courſe, we ſhal be able to ſee the frame of our hearts and carriages preſented to our view, and ſo diſcern to the ful, the loathſomneſs of thoſe noyſom luſts that leproſie-like overſpreads our whol man: Thus *James* adviſeth, *James*, 1. 25. that we *ſhould look our ſelves into the Law of Liberty*, that is a Criſtal and cleer *Glaſs*, and wil diſcover what is amiſs even to a mote, the ſmalleſt ſins and infirmities, and that unto their ful view. *Paul* a learned Phariſee, he ſaw more of ſin, and more of himſelf by the Law, than either he conceived, or ſuſpected to belong to him, *Rom.* 7. 7. 9. *I had not known that luſt had been ſin, but that the Law ſaith, Thou ſhalt not covet*: nor did he think himſelf bad, or his condition ſo miſerable, but *when the Law came*, that is, the light and diſcovery of the Law, he perceived

perceived *his sin alive, but himself dead.*

When the Lord in any Ordinance by the Truth, shall discover our sins, our Conscience shall come in as a witness to accuse, or as a Sergeant and Officer by Commission from the Almighty to arrest and condemn us for any evil, we should attend both; to see Gods mind to the utmost therein, and then it's certain we shal see. We must beware that neither out of carnal fear, nor sensual security of our sinful hearts, we be willing to lay aside the evidence of the truth as content not to hearken to the Verdict of it, or desirous not to listen to the dictate of Conscience, but to shake off the Consideration of either, lest we should sink down in discouragement. It's certain, Truth is terrible, and the Dictates of Conscience are dreadful when they come with Commission from the Almighty; yet true it is, walking humbly under Gods hand, we should be so far from fearing the discovery of our sins, that we should be comforted in this, that they are discovered to us: and we should compose our hearts in quietness with the right consideration of the manner of Gods dealing in this kind, and commune with our selves on this manner: *It's a fearful thing indeed to fall into the hands of the Almighty, who is a consuming fire*, but yet herein the faithfulness of the Lord is seen, he deals so with me as he doth with those that he intends good unto; he makes *His* see their sins, and that clearly, before they ever see his pardon of them, or power against them: if he never convinceth, he never converts. He sent his holy Spirit into the World for this purpose, to perform the work; this is the way to Grace and Christ, I bless his Name I am in the way. I wil hearken to the Evidence of the Truth that I may understand al that God intends, and listen to the checks of Conscience that I may know to the full the Nature of my sin; When we have a little inkling either by an Ordinance, or Conscience, take hold of the least intimation, and leave it not until you come to the bottom, and perceive the utmost vileness

Means 2.

vileness in such a course. It was so with *David* who took hold of the reproof of the Prophet *Nathan*; and though he mentioned but one thing wherein the grosness and greatness of the evil appeared, yet hence he took occasion to overlook his whol course, to consider every circumstance, and to ravel out all until he came to the bottom, he confesseth al the falsness of his heart which he used in the contrivement of that evil, and leaves not there until he come to the Root of al, the wretchedness of his Nature, that Original corruption in which he was born and bred, *Psal.* 51. 5, 6. *Behold Lord, I was warmed in wickedness, and in sin did my mother conceive me, but thou lovest Truth in the inward parts*: but I would have colored over my vile carriage, and by false pretences I would have hidden the filthiness of my sins, by sending for *Uriah*, and sending him to his own house to have lien with his wife, that so he might have fathered the sin without suspicion. This was the guise and disposition of *Eli*, 1 Sam. 3. 17. he enjoyns Samuel *not to hide any thing from him of all the things that the Lord had spoken*; he would hear al, and know the worst of al: So it ought to be with every man, that in earnest, desires to know the evil of his sin. If the Word discover, Conscience accuse for any sin, take the first notice and inkling, cease not to make ful enquiry, and see what wil become of it, search unto the very bottom.

Means 3. *Labor to take all those cursed Cavils, the wily shifts and devices which carnal Reason casts in, to break the blow as it were, and to defeat, and put by the Authority of the Truth*: So that the edg and powerful Operation of an Ordinance is wholly blunted and hindred, that it prevails not with the heart, nor can the Judgment be set down by Evidence of Argument and Reason, which comes to be darkened by such Cavils and devices. Here is then the great skil, and ought to be the chief care of a Christian, *not to consult with flesh and blood*; at least to

to cleer the Coast of al such Carnal Reasonings, that the Evidence of the Truth may be entertained without gainsaying, and attain his proper powerful effect upon the mind and heart.

These Cavils and Shifts are commonly referred to Three Heads.

1 *To lighten the evil of sin, that it is not so heinous and dangerous a matter as Ministers seem to make it.*

2. *If it were so dangerous, yet the danger may easily be prevented.*

3 *If it cannot be prevented, yet it may be suffered without any such extream hazard, as many fear, and others would bear the world in hand.*

To remove these out of the way, that so the Work of Conviction may go on with more success, we shal shortly speak to all of them in the Order propounded.

It's incident to al men naturally to have a slight apprehension of their sin; partly they do not know it, partly they are loth to be troubled and disquieted with it; and therefore out of their own ignorance and security they would easily perswade themselves, it's not so hainous and dangerous, that so they may not fear so much to commit, nor care so much to reform them when once they are fallen, nor yet suffer themselves to be overborn with terror and discouragement, though they continue in them. This lessening of the hainousnes and dangerousnes of sin issues upon a four-fold Ground for the most part. 1.

The commonness of sin, makes men not start at the commission of it; that which so many do, and so ordinarily, and happily such who are for their parts and places of no mean esteem, they imagine and conclude they may safely do. We are sinners say they, and good now, are not all so? If it go ill with us, then God be merciful to many. We have our failings, we are not alone, we have many fellows, who lives without them? If we *Shift*, 1.

were

were ſo groſs as ſuch, you had juſt reaſon to condemn us, and we to condemn and loath our ſelves, but being no other than the moſt are, I hope there is no great matter in it.

I Anſwer in three things:

Anſw. 1. 1 *The more common thy ſin, the more hainous it is, and the heavier thy Curſe will be from the Lord.* The more they be that oppoſe the Lord and his Truth, the more need of thy help, and the greater had been thy love to him and his cauſe now to ſtand by it, and the greater thy falſneſs and unfaithfulneſs to forſake both, and to joyn ſides with the wicked. See how unkindly he takes the ſuſpicion and appearance to be carried away in a common defection, *John*, 6. 66. When many went back and walked no more with Jeſus, if commonneſs might have given encouragement, the Diſciples had warrant enough to have carried them in the ſtream, yet ſee how il the Lord takes the leaſt inclination or ſuſpicion that way, *Wil ye alſo go away?* See how heavily the anger of the Lord breaks out againſt ſuch Apoſtats, *Judg.* 5. 3. *Curſe ye* Meroz *(ſaid the Angel of the Lord) yea, curſe ye* Meroz *bitterly, becauſe they went not out to help the Lord againſt the mighty.* When oppoſition grows fierce, and the numbers grow to be many, and the power mighty of ſuch as become Adverſaries to the Truth, he who then becomes careleſs of the Lord and his Cauſe, the Curſe of God comes out againſt ſuch in a peculiar manner, he aims at them by name; Curſe ye ſuch who go not out to help the Lord againſt the mighty pride, the mighty ſtubbornneſs, the mighty ſluggiſhneſs and unprofitableneſs, and baſe Earthly-mindedneſs which gets footing, and grows common in the places, and amongſt ſuch with whom we converſe.

Anſw. 2. 2 As it is a heavy curſe to be heavy, *ſo thy eſtate to be miſerable, and thy ſoul as yet deſtitute of any ſaving work of Gods Grace.* Thou art in the road and broad way to deſtruction, and this is one evidence it's the common

mon track, *Broad is the gate, wide is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat*, *Matth.* 7. 13. It's easie to find, and as easie, yet certain thou shalt perish in it. It's made a description of a Child of wrath and such who are dead in sins and trespasses, *Eph.* 2. 2. *Who walk according to the Course of this world according to the prince of the Aire, who rules in the hearts of the Children of disobedience.* Dost thou walk in the common road according to the course of the world? thou art in the kingdome of darkness, and art ruled by the Prince of darkness and shall go to everlasting darkness. Dead Fishes Swim down the stream. Thou art a dead man if thou goest with the stream of the world.

Beware of Comforts to the World

Therefore the Apostle *James* gives it as an Evidence of true Religion and a man truly Religious *James.* 1. 27. *This is true Religion to keep a mans self unspotted of this present Evil world. If a man say he be Religious and yet Refrain not his tongue, the Religion of that man is vain,* If a man will lie and Rayl and Shift up and down because others do so, truly the Religion of that man is vain, and so his hopes and comforts will be.

Answ. 3.

The Commonness of this sin doth exceedingly aggravate it and make it out of measure sinful, even of a poysoning and spreading and infectious Nature, it's not confined within a mans own compas and conscience, it's not a sin in a mans self but there be many sins in this one, it becomes the Cause of sin to many others. Many are provoked and encouraged to the practice of the like Evils by thy practice, Examples are of a constrayning Nature, *Peter dissembles and many are* snatched aside by his example to do as he did *Gal.* 2 Many are strengthened and confirmed in their wickedness because they have thy example to warrant them, they will certainly perish. But their Blood will be required at thy hand: thou wast the man that did lead them to an ungodly Course and didst harden them therein. *And the Name*

of God and his truth will be blasphemed amongst the Heathen for thy sake Rom. 2. 24. How can they but conclude that Religion allows such an ungodly Course which men dare So Commonly to commit, and to Continue in without remorse or reformation.

Shift 2. The Second shift whereby our carnal hearts would keep off the Evidence of Conviction, is this, *As the commonness seems to lessen our corruption, so the naturalness is made pretence to excuse it*: Here the plea is ready whereby men would challenge pity and connivance as their debt: It is my disposition or constitution, I cannot mend it; it is my Nature, I cannot alter it. Al flesh is frail, God knows whereof we be made, how feeble we be, and he doth not expect perfection at our hands, no man counts his coat the worse because there be some moats in it, or casts away his Gold because there is a flaw or mark in it: *It's my natural infirmity, and hath not each man his failings?* would you have us be Saints?

Answ. *Saints? Yea, either Saints or Devils.* The Lord would have thee to be so. *This is the will of God, even your sanctification*, 1 Thes. 4. 3. the Law would have thee to be so, 1 *Peter*, 1. 15. *Be ye holy in all manner of Conversation*: thy Profession would have thee to be so, *Let every one that cals upon the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *And he that hath this hope purgeth himself as he is pure*, 1 John, 3. 5. That generally, but to come a little neerer, and to shew the vanity of this Shift, I Answer,

1. First, *This excuse that would cover one sin, discovers another; and thy Plea doth give in undeniable evidence that all the means of Grace that ever thou hast enjoyed, and God hath vouchsafed, hath never wrought upon thee*, nor prevailed with thee for good to this very day, nor hast thou received benefit or profit therefrom; but al the pains that hath been taken with thee is like water spilt upon the ground. For that's the manner of the Lords proceeding with the soul of a sinner, when he intends savingly and effectually to work upon him, he changeth

changeth his Nature, gives him another heart, and as it was ſaid of *Saul* in a like caſe, 1 *Sam.* he makes him another man. It's the Propheſie of the power of the Goſpel, *The Leopard becomes as a Lamb, and the Lyon as a Kid*, Iſai. 11. 6. the ſavage, harſh, and untameable diſtempers, which like a fretting Leproſie, poſſeſſed the nature of ſinners, are taken away when the Lord comes to take poſſeſſion of them, or to prevail with them in the power of any Ordinance. It's the firſt ſtep in the profeſſion of the Goſpel: He that wil be Chriſts Diſciple muſt deny himſelf, he muſt be able to ſay as the blind man whom our Savior cured; *I was blind, but now I ſee; I was dead, but now I am alive*: I was of a proud, peeviſh, wayward, waſpiſh, contentious, froward, quarrelſom diſpoſition, could agree with no body, nor with my ſelf neither, but ſince the Lord hath met with me, and wrought upon me by his Word and Spirit, I am not I; I have another mind, and another heart, and another carriage and Converſation than formerly. *He that is in Chriſt, and Chriſt in him, he is a new Creature*, and hath a new Nature, he ſtrives moſt againſt that unto which he is moſt addicted by his own diſpoſition, he watcheth how to prevent that, he fears al the day long leſt he ſhould be ſurprized with it, fortifies moſt in the improvement of al means againſt that, confeſſeth that with moſt ſorrow and bitterneſs, ſeeks with moſt care and diligence to obtain help from Heaven to ſubdue that, and commonly gets the greateſt ground againſt the ſame.

Haſt thou then the ſame corrupt Nature? Conclude thou mayeſt and write upon it, thou never haſt prayed aright, heard aright, thou haſt never received a Sacrament aright unto this day, thou haſt never profited by any means thou haſt enjoyed, or duties thou haſt performed to this day.

Thy Diſeaſe and diſtempers are deſperate, and likely never to be cured, and thou recovered out of them: *Anſw.* 2.

when they come to be natural as it were, and yield to no Remedy; *Jer.* 13. 23. *Can the Black-more change his skin, and the Leopard his ſpots? no more can they learn to do well who are accuſtomed to do evil.* There are ſome ſpots of filth which are caſt upon our coats and fleſh, there is a ſooty blackineſs wherewith our garments and our skins are ſometimes ſullied withal by ſomething from without, which may be cleanſed and waſhed away with little labor in a ſhort time; but thoſe which grow out of Nature, as Moles and Wens in the Body, there is little hope that ever they ſhould be altered as long as Nature it ſelf continues. It is ſo with diſtempers, when ſome ſudden occaſions or temptations from without, taints and pollutes the ſoul, there is *Hope in Iſrael* that ſome Spiritual means, like healing Medicines ſeaſonably applied, may help and recover. But when men out of a corrupt inclination are cuſtomarily carried in the continuance of ſome diſtemper, it bcomes like another Nature, he may loſe his life and ſoul, but is like never to loſe his luſt, that wil go to his Grave, and ſo to Hell with him. *Job*, 20. 11, 12. *When wickedneſs is ſweet in a mans mouth, when he hides it under his tongue, when he ſpares it, and forſakes it not, his bones are full of the ſins of his youth*; they have been bred and brought up with him, grown and continued and encreaſed dayly with them; he would not leave them, they wil not leave him, they ſhal lie down in the duſt with him, riſe with him to Judgment, and go to Hell with him in the end.

Anſw. 3. *Thy perſon comes moſt to be abhorred and loathed by the Almighty, for which thou vainly conceiveſt thou mayeſt be pitied.* We pity a man that drinks poyſon becauſe it's not his diſpoſition to be ſo, but the infection that befel him; but the Spider and the Toad we abhor the ſight, and not endure to touch them, becauſe they are of a poyſonful Nature. So it is with the Spiritual plague of thy Soul; even the deareſt of Gods Servants may

may be ſurprized with a pang of pride, overborn with a ſudden hurry of paſſion, and frowardneſs, and the Lord pities, and pardons, and paſſeth it by, and wil not lay it to their charge, becauſe it was their Diſeaſe, not their diſpoſition, their temptation and ſurprizal, not their purpoſe, the Lord looks at it ſo. *You have heard of the Patience of* Job, *James* 6. But when ſuch noyſom luſts become Natural, and that we *live in them*, as in our Element, when we have, and keep, and own an accurſed poyſonful Nature, it's that which the Lord deteſts; *The froward in ſpirit is an abomination to the Lord, Prov.* 3. 32. In the old Law it was obſerved, that when the Leproſie tainted the Skin, but did not ſpread, the Leaper was pronounced clean; but if it did fret into the fleſh, it was unclean; to teach us, that though we had leprous diſtempers that tainted and defiled our performances, yet if they did not fret into the fleſh, our affections taken aſide with them, the Lord looks at us as clean in his Chriſt, becauſe it was not we that in our hearts purpoſed the evil, but ſin that prevailed againſt our purpoſe; but if we hugged them in our boſom, laid them nigh unto our hearts, and took them as our Natures, we were loathſom in the ſight of God.

Shift. 3. The third Shift whereby a carnal heart comes to lighten the hainouſneſs of his evil, and therefore looks not at it as ſo loathſom as he ſhould and it deſerves. *Becauſe he can put off the blame from himſelf* (as he conceives) *upon his Companions, who either by their inticements and perſwaſions, have deluded him, and led him into ſinful courſes, beyond his intendment and ſometimes contrary to his deſire: and therefore he concludes he may juſtly free himſelf from blame, and lay the blame upon them wholly.* It was the fault of ſuch & ſuch, I am free. Had not they counſelled it, I had never committed the ſin; had not they perſwaded me, I had never purpoſed it, it was not in my thoughts, but they allured, deluded, and drew me to it. Let them be charged with

with the guilt, and bear the punishment, I hope I may be excused. This manner of sinful shifting of our faults unto another is that which all of us have inherited from our first Parents. It was their practice immediately after the fal, & We their Posterity have made it a president to our Posterity unto this day. when the Lord challenged Adam for his offence and breach of covenant, *why hast thou done this? he puts it off to the woman, the woman to the Serpent.* Gen. 3. 12. 13. 14. *The woman which thou gavest me* (Saies Adam) *she gave unto me, and I did eat.* the woman she takes the rebound and puts the ball behind her, *The Serpent beguiled me.* but al in vain, this could not free any of them from the punishment or excuse them from the fault.

Answ. To shew the feebleness of this fond pretence, I shal answer several things.

1. The Aggravation of the evil of this sin, in yielding to the corrupt Counsel of loose and bad companions, and the suffering of a mans self to be misled by their delusionsappears in this, that they *who are here in guilty they do in this their practice prefer the folly of man before the wisdom of God*, their falshood above his truth, serve their turn and base ends, maintain their honor, & that in an ungodly way, rather than the honor of the eternal God from whom they have received al they do possess to whom they owe themselves, and should improve al they have and are to his praise and yet *they do not only set up base men but even the lusts of men before the honor of the Almighty*, and profess so much by their practice, its not the command of God but the corrupt counsels of vile men shal carry us, not his promises though great and precious, but their perswasions shal prevayl with us, may suffer the name and honor of the Lord to lye in the dust, may trample it under their feet that they may promote their persons, and the credit of their proceedings

ings though wretchedly wicked. And what greater indignity can be offered to the great God of heaven and earth, who wil require it at your hands, when your companions wil not open their mouths to excuſe you nor can defend you from his vengeance. the hainouſneſs of this conſpiracie againſt the Lord he himſelf acknowledgeth in *Eli's* indulgence yielding out of the eaſineſs of his ſpirit to his ſons in their prophane carriage in that he did not proceed with that rigour and ſeverity as the loathſomneſs of their carriage did juſtly cal for. The Lord doth plainly and peremptorily charge him with a double evil 1 *Sam.* 2. 29. 30. 31. *that they kicked at his Sacrifice* that is, caſt contempt upon his holy things, and *honored his Sons*, and that in their lewdneſs *above him*, when out of a feeble childiſhneſs he would ſuffer his ſons to abuſe Gods ordinances, and not adminiſter a ſharp reproof or execute a juſt and ſevere cenſure ſuitable to the nature of the fact upon them. he gave ſo far allowance to the contempt of Gods ordinances and was more willing to pleaſe them than God therefore the Lord denounceth his direful diſpleaſure againſt him, he repented him of all the good he had intended, and would purſue him and all his Poſterety to the utter confuſion of their faces, *becauſe thou haſt kicked againſt my ſacrifice, and haſt honored thy ſons above me, therefore the day ſhal come I wil cut off thy arme &c. For thoſe that honor me ſhal be honored, and thoſe that deſpiſe me ſhal be deſpiſed.* Thus the Lord dealt with *Jehoſaphat* when he inconſiderately joyned ſides with *Ahab.* 2. *Cron.* 18. 2. ſhouldeſt thou love thoſe that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord. Sodering with the ſociety of the wicked is to ſide it againſt the God of all the world: the Lord cannot bear it but his anger breaks out immediately againſt ſuch.

By your yielding to the counſel of the ungodly *you do abet* *Anſw.* 2

abet them in their wickedneſs, and appear as a ſecond in the field with them, ſtrengthen their hands and encourage their hearts, ſteel their faces and make them reſolutely bold, and impenitently impudent in their ungodly proceedings. they dare adventure to ſay and do what ever evil may ſerve their turnes, and maintain what they do without either fear or care, to hear or reform becauſe they have others to maintain them in what they do. As the ſcripture ſpeaks of *Abſolons* rebellion 2 *Sam.* 15. 12. *The conſpiracy grew ſtrong for the people encreaſed continually with Abſolon*, the company and encreaſe of his numbers added encouragment to his rebellious courſe. Whereas had the people forſaken him his project and proceeding muſt needs have fallen to the ground, and he been forced to have forſaken his rebellious courſe, and hence it was *Achitophels* policy & that accurſed counſel he gave to *Abſolon* to enter into his Fathers Concubines, in the view of the people, that he might ſettle the hearts of the people more ſure to him in that there was no hope of reconciliation and agreement betwixt him, and his Father and ſo eſtabliſh his own ſafety. Common Soldiers if their numbers encreaſe though they be but weak and unskilful yet give encouragement to the trayned band, and the Commanders themſelves, yea their very appearance in the field, though they ſtrike not a ſtroke, helps much in the Fight. So the Prophet in the former place chargeth this evil upon *Jehoſaphat* in ſiding with *Ahab* in his deſign, 2 *Chron.* 29. 2. *Shouldeſt thou help the ungodly?* he that yields to the Counſel of the ungodly, and joyns hands with them in their way and work, *he helps the ungodly*, and is guilty of their ſin, and blood. Thou that art reſolved to ſoldier with the Society of the ungodly, and ſo ſuit them in their way, to maintain what they ſay and do, let them ſay and do what they wil, thou helpeſt a falſe tongue to lye, a malicious heart to reproach and undermine, an unjuſt hand to oppreſs,

for

for thou wilt defend what they do, let them do what they wil that is naught.

Thou that art thus deluded and taken aside with the invegleings of others, though the Lord looks at them as Leaders into evil, and so will reward them, *Yet know thou must, that thy condition is far worse, in some respects more dangerous than theirs, and thy plagues will prove more heavy*; so far art thou from hoping for any ease or pity to thy self, because thou art misled, that thy sin and judgment wil hereby be encreased. It's the sad doom of our Savior, and worthy of most serious consideration, *Matth.* 23. 15. *Wo be unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass Sea and Land to make a Proselyte*; that is, to make one of their Sect and humor, one of their hang-by's that must be pinned to their sleeves, melt into their Opinions, and imbrace their practice; when they have made him their own, their sworn Vassal, al of a string, that they can stir him and turn him as they wil, mark the issue; *They make him twice more the Child of the Devil than themselves.* That Perdition comes to be their Portion, and Hell for their Inheritance, they are the heirs of it, and they have a double portion there; their plagues twice more heavy, and therfore their sins must carry the same proportion, twice more vile than those that were their Leaders into that leudness. Brethren, what a dreadful thing is it for one to think of it, The Scribes & Pharisees who were cruel oppressors, inhumane exactors, *who devoured widdows Houses, false Hypocrites, blind guides, painted Tombs, Serpents, and a generation of Vipers, who cannot escape the damnation of Hell*, and one would think Hell it self had scarce any worse. Yet when they had miss-led some poor Sneaks, and deluded some ignorant silly people by their importunities, and painted appearances of Holiness, brought them to the bent of their bow, captivated them wholly to their Opinions and Practices, what a dreadful thing is it to think that these poor deluded 3.

ded Creatures should be twice more the Children of Hell than such, who to common apprehensions might seem to be the scum of Hell. Hear and fear, and let your hearts sink and shake within you, you poor misguided Creatures, take a scantling of your condition by the former example. Imagine you saw a proud Pharisee, a man of a false tongue full of turnings and windings, he cannot live without lying, he is froward in spirit, and sticks not *to pervert the straight waies of the Lord*, that he may please his own will, suit his own humor, bend the Rule to his mind, not his heart to the Rule; one of an uncontroulable Spirit that will contend with God and men if they cross him in a sinful course. Suppose thou sawest this man receive his Sentence at the day of Judgment, and sent down to the pit, *For without shall be lyars, &c.* Revel. 22. 15. *They who pervert the straight waies of the Lord are the Children of the Devil*, Acts 13. 10. *And such as sow contentions amongst brethren, and are contentious, and obey not the Truth, tribulation, and wrath, and anguish, shall be upon the soul of every one such*, Rom. 2. 8. He hath learned thee his Trade of Lying, mis-led thee into the like perverse, contentious courses, *How shalt thou escape the damnation of Hell?* Oh thou wilt reply; Lord, it was his counsel that cozened me, his perswasions and insinuations that drew me to those evils, I had never done them else: I hope therefore I may be pitied, though he be plagued; I may be excused, though the Curse fall upon him, who was the cause and Author of all: No, no, poor misguided creature, thou art utterly mistaken; He is the Child of the Devil, and hath received now his Inheritance, thou hearest him yelling in the bottomless pit; he hath his load more than he can bear; but thou art twice more the child of Hell, this is able to sink thy heart with the very thought of it. Thy slavery is far greater, thy obstinacy more, and therefore thy recovery harder than his; he is a slave to his sins, thou art a

slave

ſlave to the man and ſin and all; he wil hear reaſon if it be propounded, thou knoweſt nothing, and therefore receiveſt nothing unleſs thou be allowed by thy Leader, the leſs hope that ever thou ſhouldſt be convinced or reformed. The Lord is forced to let in the flaſhes of the fierceſt of his fury into the faces of ſuch miſguided creatures, to bring them to the conſideration of him and themſelves, and to deal punctually for their conviction, *Pſal.* 50. 18. *When thou ſaweſt a Thief, thou conſentedſt, and thou waſt partaker with Adulterers*, q. d. they perſwaded thee, and thou didſt imbrace their perſwaſion. *Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy brother*; he points out the time, the place, the company, the crew, amongſt whom they ſate, *Theſe things thou haſt done, and I kept ſilence, and thou thoughteſt that I was altogether like thee; but I will reprove thee, and ſet thy ſins in order before thee. Oh conſider this, ye that forget God.* You forget, you miſguided ſinners, that God was preſent, and ſaw what you plotted, that God is Omniſcient, and knows what you intended, that he is the righteous Judg of all the World, and will bring the ſecret things of darkneſs, to light, and make known the hid Counſels of the heart. Therefore let me end with the Advice and Counſel of *Moſes*; do not think to excuſe your ſelves, becauſe deluded by your company, but leave counſel and company; ſhare not in their ſins and Societies, if you wil not ſhare in their plagues. *Numb.* 14. 26. *Depart I pray you, from the Tents of theſe wicked men, touch nothing of theirs*, their counſels and perſwaſions; and they found his Counſel good, and th ir own experience gave proof, *They fled and cried when the Earth opened, leſt the Earth ſwallow us up alſo.* So be not you deceived alſo, leſt you be damned alſo: ſtay not amongſt wicked company leſt you periſh among them.

Shift 4.

A Fourth Shift which ſeems to leſſen mens ſins, and to take off the ſtrength of Conviction, and the danger of the evil, *is the ſtrength of ſuch provocations which*

(as they pretend) *constrain them against the heart and hair to the commission of evil, and therefore might excuse them in it.* Why say men under such assaults, their speeches were so harsh and uncomely, I had almost said unchristian, and cross to rule, their carriage so cross and unreasonable, beyond the compass of humanity, yea, cross to common sence, their provocations so great, so many that they were unsufferable, they would have angred a Saint. If there fel any thing uncomly (as it's impossible but in reason it should) the fault is in him that gave the provocation; a man in that case may seem to be freed from blame, such unreasonable passages would put an Angel beyond his patience, flesh and blood cannot bear it.

Answ. True flesh and blood cannot bear it, therefore *flesh and blood cannot please God, therefore flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*; flesh and blood cannot save you, therefore should not rule you, if you wil hear the Rule of Christ, it's plain, 1 *Pet.* 3. 9. *We must not render evil for evil, railing for railing, and if any man desire to see good daies, and to seek peace*; this is the way which God appoints and blesseth: If you wil see the practice of our Savior Christ, it's also plain and precedential, *He gave his cheeks to the Buffeters, and his back to the Smiters, and as a Lamb was dumb before the Shearer in all his sufferings*; and he was more innocent than you, suffered more wrong, had more reason and Authority also, if it had been a Rule so to have righted himself: But he would not do so, 1 *Pet.* 2. 29. *When he was reviled, he reviled not again*; nay, the Text saies, he durst not do so, and that when he dealt with the Devil, the Accuser of the Brethren, for so many Interpreters understand the place, and I cannot see but it's safe and suitable; safe for the sence, and suitable to the Context. *Jude*, 8. 9. reproving that sin of reviling, verse 8. he confutes and condemns it thus, *Yet* Michael *the Arch-Angel, when contending with the Devil,*

Take quest Notice here —

Devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, *durst not bring against him a railing accusation.* This *Michael* who appeared now as the Messenger of the Covenant, and in the form of a Servant, and therefore contested with Satan, as in the daies of his flesh when tempted. If Christ durst not, how dares any man? If not to the Devil, how any to such as are in Dignity?

But come we neerer to the Shift, and examine the vanity of it; and that wil appear in Two things:

1 *It's very Unreasonable.*

2 *Very Dishonorable, that others provocations should prevail with us to break out unto any unseemly practice.*

It is an unreasonable thing, Because another doth me wrong, that therefore I should wrong the Lord, my soul, my place; It's not an evil in Truth, but an honor, and wil be a mans comfort, and bring a reward with it, to bear an injury, harsh dealing, and hard measure; *Blessed are ye when men persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you, they bring great reward.* But to revile, and deal harshly with others, because so dealt withal, is to be injurious to God, to my profession, to the peace and comfort of my own Conscience: Because a man cuts my finger, should I go and stab my heart? men would look at it as a way of Frenzy: Because men set themselves against me, should I set God against me also? This is the Apostles cure, 1 *Pet.* 3. 12. *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, but the Face of the Lord is against them that do evil.* Nay, how cross to common sence is it, when thou thinkest the carriages of men are unreasonable, their provocations unsufferable, yet thou wilt do the like, and so condemn thy self by thine own doing. 1.

It's marvelous dishonorable to God: We do not lift up his Name that is called upon by us, *and expres the vertues of him that hath called us to his marvelous Light*, and out of the world, that we might shine as Lights in a crooked 2.

crooked generation; what ſerves your ſtrength for but for a time of trial? you ſay fleſh and blood cannot bear, why good now? what ſerves your Grace for, but to do other and better than fleſh and blood can do? This kind of diſtemper overtook *Moſes* and it coſt him dear, and the Lord would not once vouchſafe to hear an excuſe or to abate him of the puniſhment, *Pſal.* 106. 31. 32. *It went ill with* Moſes *for their ſakes becauſe they provoked his ſpirit, ſo that he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips. Therfore* Moſes *himſelf* ſaid Deutr. 1. 37. *the Lord was angry with me for your ſakes, ſaying thou ſhalt not go into the Land,* nay Deutr. 3. 26. *the Lord would not hear him, ſaying, ſpeak no more to me of this matter.* This is a great diſhonor to God and grace, when we are overcome of evil, whereas we ought to *overcome evil with goodneſs.* Rom. 12. 21.

Shift 5. *Whereby men labor to put by the ſtroke of the truth, that either it ſhal not hit at leaſt not wound, either not touch them, or not trouble them, it is they* FORGET *their duty wholly and therefore did it not.* The throng of buſineſs preſſed in upon them, and that ſomthing unexpectedly, did diſtract them, that croud of occaſions coming in like a mighty ſea did ſo take up their thoughts & ſurpriſe and hurry them, they remember not what they ſhould do and therefore did not perform what they ought, it was the ſlip of a mans memory, no ſuch great matter, nor wil be ſo ſadly charged upon a man they hope, It were hard if it ſhould, It was but my forget-

Anſw. fulneſs. But? *forget thy duty man*? what couldeſt thou ſay more wherein thou mayeſt aggravate thy fault in a moſt heavy manner? Is not this the expreſs wil of God, that a man ſhould *do with all his might what his hand finds to do* Eccleſ. 9. 10. *That he ſhould abide in the calling unto which God hath called him,* 1 Cor. 7. 20. Is not this the great errand of a mans life, the end why we came into the world to do Gods wil? the only charge that is laid upon us by the Almighty, wee

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are not charged to be rich or honorable, to gain the profits and pleasures of this world, there is not such a text to be seen in the whol Bible; thou only liveſt to diſcharge thy duty, if thou forgetteſt that, thou forgetteſt why thou liveſt, and the very excuſe is a far greater ſin than that was which thou didſt ſeem to excuſe, and thy puniſhment wil be anſwerable when out of thine own mouth thou wilt be condemned. As it was ſaid to him in the ſtory, when the Prophet in his own perſon would diſcover the Kings careleſneſs, to him he diſguiſed himſelf as the King paſſed by, and ſo paſſed by him and ſaid; 1 *Kings*, 20. 39. *Thy ſervant went out into the midſt of the battel, and behold a man brought a man to me, ſaying, Keep this man, if by any means he be miſſing, then ſhal thy life be for his life, and as thy ſervant was buſie here and there, he was gone; and the King of Iſrael ſaid, ſo ſhal thy judgment, thy ſelf hath decided it.* Let me ſpeak to thee in a like manner, The Lord hath given thee his holy commands in charge, the Grace of God, the Goſpel of Grace which hath appeared and which bringeth Salvation teacheth men to deny *ungodly & unworldly luſts, & to live Godly & ſoberly in this preſent evil world, & to be Zealous of good works*, 2 Titus, 13. 14. *that we ſhould mortify the deeds of the fleſh, that we might live*, Rom. 8. 13. but if we walk after the fleſh we ſhal dy, theſe Evangelical commands thou art bound to obſerve, if by any means they be awanting thou looſeſt thy life, if thou looſeſt them; forget theſe, and God wil forget thee. Now thou returneſt thy excuſe, that while thou wert buſie here and there, buſie in planting, and building, buſie in plotting and contriving thine own carnal contents, thy heart buſie and eager in the purſuit of earthly occaſions and imployments, thy thoughts buſie in deviſing and acting meanes, in obſerving and improving opportunities, thy hand buſie in endeavouring to the utmoſt of thy power and skil to accompliſh theſe, either ſinful, or at the beſt earthly

earthly conveniences thou mindeſt theſe ſo much; the other was wholly out of thy mind; out of thy own mouth ſhalt thou be condemned, ſo ſhal thy judgment be thou heedleſs ſinful creature, thou haſt decided the matter, *they that forget God ſhal be turned to Hell.* Pſal. 9. 17 *They who mind earthly things their end is damnation,* Phil. 3. 21. God in mercy wil not mind thee, he wil not mind the prayers thou makeſt, he wil not mind thy complaints, thy neceſſities thou preſenteſt before him.

Anſw. Thus generally: For a particular anſwer I ſhal do two things.

1. *Shew who thoſe be that make this ſhift.*
2. *How this aggravates their ſin.*

1. *Who thoſe be that make this excuſe,* that each man may take his portion, that thoſe may not be burdened by miſtakes who deſire to burden themſelves, that we may not bruiſe the broken in ſpirit. There be two ſorts of forgetful perſons.

First, *ſuch who in the ſence of their own feebleneſs and brickleneſs of memory are not able to keep the wholſom truths, thoſe heavenly treaſures which many times are commended to their care & obſervance,* but thoſe precious promiſes, precious comforts & directions, they ſlip away out of their weak memories like pure liquor out of a leaking veſſel, which makes them ſit down in ſilence, and their hearts ſink in diſcouragement loaded with the loathſomneſs and greatneſs of the evil, that they cannot tel how to bear it, nor yet to bear up their hearts under the weight of it, they conceive it ſo hainous, ſo dangerous a ſin; that which we cannot retain ſay they, how ſhal we have the uſe of it, how ſhal we anſwer the loſs of ſuch glorious truths, and the very weight of the evil ſhakes their very hopes many times. And you ſhal ever obſerve the favour the Lord ſhews to ſuch weak ones and the work of his grace in them, that though through the ſcantneſs and narrowneſs of their memories, they

they are not able to keep things in their order & to make report of them; yet ſo much as they have preſent uſe for they wil have that at hand. and ſuch truths which they ſhal have need of for after times they are never generally call'd to the practice of them, but they are call'd to their minds, Gods ſpirit brings them to remembrance *their hearts by faith received them and hold them* Mat. 13. 23. but the narrowneſs of their memory was like a houſe that had but ſcant roomes, kept them in a lumber together, but there they were, and therefore the ſpirit brings them forth. *John* 14. 26. *The comforter ſhall bring all things to your remembrance*, Theſe are not the perſons we now ſpeak unto, for they lighten and leſſen their evil by this means, theſe find it heavie and load their hearts with Godly ſorrow for it.

2. There is therefore another ſort, *whoſe wound of forgetfulneſs lyes not in the weakneſs of their memories, or ſcantneſs of abilities that they cannot retain the truths commended to them, and come within their charge, but ſuch who ſtuff their minds and memories ſo ful of earthly occaſions*, or attendance to ſome diſtemper that either they *keep out* or *crowd out* the rememberance of their duty and think becauſe it was not in their minds, therefore they have plea ſufficient if it be not in their practice, and thus their diſpoſition and ſpirit is worſe than their carriage and behavior, and this their excuſe it encreaſeth their ſin, in three things, or adds a three fold aggravation to it.

They give in undeniable evidence *that they do not only neglect the ſervice but that they have no love to it*; not only their endeavours are wanting but their hearts and faithfulneſs, are wanting alſo to the Lord and his work, love and faithfulneſs wil cauſe attendance and remembrance where ever it is. The man whoſe heart is endeared to the woman he loves, he dreams of her in the night, hath her in his eye & apprehenſion when he awakes, muſeth on her as he ſits at table, walks with her when I.

he travels and parlies with her in each place where he comes. So it would be with thee, If thou remembreſt little and makeſt that thy excuſe, its certain thou loveſt little, if thou mindeſt not, thou affecteſt not the Lord and his waies, *Pſal.* 119. 97. *Oh how I do love thy law, it is my meditation day and night* ſo the Saints Iſa. 26. 8. *The deſires of our hearts are towards thee, and the remembrance of thy name.* And therefore the Pſalmiſt again profeſſeth, *thy Commandements are ever with me.* The heart of the lover keeps company with the thing beloved. If thou mindeſt not to practice the duty its certain thou mayeſt conclude thou never yet hadſt love to the Lord Jeſus and his ſervice.

2. This forgetfulneſs not minding that which is thy charge, *ſhewes thou never hadſt a high eſteem, never yet ſett'ſt a price upon the performance of the ways and wil of God,* thou undervalueſt thy duties and lookeſt at them as things of little worth, and therefore are out of ſight, and out of mind, refuſe things that are of mean account with us, we lay them by, caſt them into any blind corner, we judg them not worth the remembrance and therefore we beſtow not our memories upon them but if there be a pearl of price ſome ſpecial and rare jewel, each man cares where he laies it, and can eaſily find it and that in the dark. So it is when thou lookeſt at the Commands the Lord gives and the duties he requires as matters of no great conſequence, and therefore beſtoweſt not thy thoughts or remembrance about them, ſee how the prophet argues from this ground *Jer.* 2.32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire, yet my people have forgotten me daies without number;* ſo where their eſteem is their memories are alſo. It's certain it's a baſe forgetful heart of the duties which are in daily practice and the diſcharge of his place, which ought to be his daily wear. A man ſhould *put on Chriſt,* his holineſs, meekneſs &c. *and adorn themſelves with a quiet and modeſt and peacable ſpirit.* yet

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these are not in his way nor his thoughts, It's certain thou carest not so much for Gods command as a frothy headed maid doth for a clout. Weigh then but in serious consideration, the wretchedness of thy pretence; shouldest thou hear a servant or a child excuse their idleness or disobedience to Master or Father on this manner, I hope you wil excuse my neglect, and pardon my disobedience, because I do not love your person, reverence or esteem your place or command, were not this to aggravate the evil no way to excuse it. Such is the sillines of this shift of thine, when thou wouldest make thy forgetfulness to lessen thy fault. Because thou doest not love the Lord nor reverence his holy law, this encreaseth the evil exceedingly.

It argues a sensual sottish, Atheistcal disposition of heart to live without God and Christ, in our course yea to put off the apprehensions of Christians and men, these are joyned together Ezek. 23. 35. *Thou hast forgotten me and cast me behind thy back*, to live an outlaw upon earth, when we attend not, mind not a law by which wee live. Thy duty is plain which is required, the sin evident that is forbidden, thou neglectest the one and committest the other, and this is the ballom that heals and helps al; I did not once think of it. It was wholly out of thy mind, I did quite forget it; why then forget thou art a Christian, nay a man, forget there is a God, that there is a Heaven to reward thee a Hell to Torment thee, forget thou hast a soul to be saved or sins to be pardoned, or avoyded until thou feelest the plagues of them, which thou wilt never be able to forget nor yet to bear. 3.

Another Shift which keeps off the edg and power of a Conviction, *Is the deadly and destroying hazards they expect, and great extremities which they fear will unavoidably befal, if they should not dispense with some sins in such cases*: Hence it is their Arguments come on armed with such unanswerable Interrogations in their Shift, 6.

apprehenſions; Why? what would you have us do? *You little know the deſperate ſtreights unto which we are driven*, were you but in our places, we are perſwaded you would not only pity us in what we have done, but would do the ſame things; Alas, would you have us begger our ſelves? undo our families? deſtroy our Liberties and Comforts? yea, hazard, nay loſe our lives? herein we hope the Lord wil allow us ſome diſpenſation or connivance: Thus they with one joynt conſent, not only deſired, but took it for granted they ſhould alſo obtain their deſire, which to them appeared ſo reaſonable; *Luke*, 14. 18. the Gueſts began to excuſe themſelves; *One hath hired a Farm, and he muſt go and ſee it*; *Another a yoke of Oxen, and he muſt try them*; and therefore *I pray you have me excuſed*; *Another hath married a Wife, and he cannot come*, and therefore deſires he may be excuſed, q. d. We conceive the caſe ſo equal and reaſonable, we ſuppoſe we need not ſpeak our ſelves, you wil plead our excuſe, which indeed pleads for it ſelf: ſhould not a man preſerve his ſtate, and therefore in a way of providence go viſit his Farm? ſhould he not attend his Calling? if he be called to follow the Plow, why ſhould he not follow it?

Anſw. For Anſwer, I ſhal ſhortly leave two or three Scriptures with thee: Is it not one Command of the Goſpel, *That they that will live godly in Chriſt, muſt ſuffer perſecution, and through many Tribulations we muſt enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. *He that will ſave his life ſhall loſe it*, Matth. 16. 25. *He that loves Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me*, Matth. 10. 37. If thou art ſo far from yielding obedience to the Goſpel, as to refuſe the terms of it, canſt thou be excuſed? To fear man more than God, to prefer thine own eaſe more than his Honor, canſt thou be excuſable? To attend the Comforts of this world with the loſs of the peace of thy Conſcience, to

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look after the preſervation of thy life, and neglect the Salvation of thy ſoul; nor God, nor man, nor Angels, nor Devils, nor thine own Conſcience will excuſe thee.

The Seventh Shift and forgery whereby our Carnal Reaſon would abate and defeat the power of the Truth, and leſſen the loathſomneſs of ſin, is that which ſeems to them ſo reaſonable, even to common ſence, as that it admits no denial; and it's taken from THE HOLINESS AND SPIRITUALNESS OF THE LAW, unto which they are bound, and that overbearing ſtrength of the body of ſin, and original corruption, whereby they are wholly diſenabled to the performance thereof; ſo that there is not only a difficulty, but even an impoſſibility to corrupt Nature, and to men in their Natural condition, to anſwer the exactneſs thereof; doth not the Text ſay that ſuch *cannot ceaſe from ſin*, 2. Pet. 2. 14. *That which is born of the fleſh, and comes from it, is fleſh*, John, 3. 8, 9. Are not the words plain, *That the Prince of the Air rules in the hearts of the children of diſobedience*, and that *he takes them captive at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. laſt. Nay, if the holy Apoſtle who had the Spirit of Grace, yet found his diſtempers bear up ſo hard, and make head againſt him, that they foiled him, and put him to the worſe, and forced him to cry out as under captivity and thraldom, *I ſee another Law in my members carrying me captive; Oh wretched man, who ſhall deliver me*, Rom. 7. If he that had received the power of Grace againſt his ſin, was yet ſo overborn, what can they be able to do that are yet *in* their natural condition (and have nothing but ſin) as all the Sons of *Adam* are ſince the Fall? That as Marriners in a ſtorm are forced by the rage of winds and weather to go whither they will carry them, not whither they ſhould; men pity them for what they ſuffer, do not blame them for what they cannot do: So it is with the ſtrength of diſtempers, which like a mighty ſtream, carry us uncontroulably

Shift 7.

troulably to the commission of evil, and it's impossible for us to prevail against; alas, what can Nature do in such a case, if God wil not help? Is it equal that men be put upon impossibilities? or that they should be punished for that which cannot be avoided? *It's not in man to direct his own waies*, to subdue his own sins: we are nothing else but a lump of corruption, the Lord knows we do what we can, and we hope we shal not be condemned for what we cannot do.

Answ. I Answer, The Lord knows, and thy Conscience knows, and the world knows, thou speakest a horrible falsehood, or to use the Phrase of Scripture, *Thou lyest, and speakest not the Truth.* More particularly I answer Four things.

1. *Thou doest not what thou mayest and canst do.* The Lord hath left in thee the remainder of many natural abilities, hath lent thee the help of many common Gifts and Graces, which by Art and Education have grown to some ripeness, and thou hast found the strokes of his Spirit partly restraining of thee from evil, and constraining of thee to good; and thou neither hast, nor dost put forth actions and endeavors answerable in any measure. It was said of them, it's as true of thee, *Rom.* 1. 21. *When they knew God, they glorified him not as God.* The unprofitable Servant was not condemned so much because he had no Talent, but that when he had *received a Talent*, he idled away his time and Talent, *hid it in a napkin*, he traded not, gained not consequently, *Matth.* 25. 25. This is thy condition, thou art in his rank, thy sin the same, and thy sentence wil be the same; thou hast not one, but many Talents; hath not the Lord given thee a mind to conceive, and a memory to retain things? why canst not thou lay out these for the Lord and his Truth, as wel as to lavish out both in the pursuit of the world, and thine own lusts, and lying vanities? thou mayest read the Bible as wel as other vain Books, seek the communion of Saints, and thy legs would

would carry thee to them, as wel as to riotous company. Nay, thou art not only faulty in not doing what thou canſt, but even neglecting, yea oppoſing the practice of thoſe Duties unto which thy judgment would carry thee, and Conſcience conſtrain thee, *Rom.* 1. 18. thou holdeſt down the Truth in unrighteouſneſs, when thy reaſon props it, thy Conſcience provokes and calls, this thou ſhouldeſt, this thou oughteſt to do, and yet thou neglecteſt it. Yea, let thine own Experience give in evidence in this behalf; thou lazieſt away thy time in the waies of thy Calling, and the work of the Lord, reads not, meditates not, prayeſt not in private, recalleſt not the things heard, laboreſt not in thy place with meekneſs, but crooked carriages, peeviſh and froward ſpeeches, rugged behaviors attend thee in thy dayly courſe: Anſwer me out of thine own heart; Would not ſo much money hire, ſuch reward promiſed and performed, perſwade thee to do ſuch duties, or reform ſuch ſins? Would not the fear of ſome diſpleaſure, at leaſt the ſharpneſs of ſome puniſhment, compel thee to reform outwardly; to find thy heart, and tongue, and mind, and force thee to pray, and read, and recal, make thee bite thy lip, and compoſe thy carriage, not to ſpeak a croſs word, or vent a paſſionate ſpeech? Thou wretch, doth twenty pound, or a whipping-poſt give thee any Grace, thou hadſt therefore ability, which thou never didſt improve as thou mighteſt.

Secondly, Be thy weakneſs what it wil be, or inabili- 2.
ty, that is not the worſt; but that which ads to the heap of the hainouſneſs of thy evil, and the height of it, *Thou art not yet* WILLING *to be made* ABLE, to receive the grace which the Lord in the Goſpel hath prepared and now tenders, and would give thee, wert thou but willing he ſhould *Rev.* 22. 17. *Oh every one that wil let him come to the waters*, for the Goſpel doth not require that a man ſhould beleeve by his own power, nor yet condemn him becauſe he doth not, but that he wil

not encline his Ear, and ſuffer the power of the Truth to take place with him, and prevail with him for good. *Chriſt comes to his own*, and he comes with Grace and Life, *but they receive him not*, John, 1. 10, 11. yea, our Savior profeſſed it to them, *Ye will not come to me that you might have life*, John, 5. 40. *And light is come into the world, but men love darkneſs rather than light*, John, 3. 19. men love their diſtempers, hug and harbor their luſts, they are weary of the Word that would reveal and remove their corruptions, *Rom.* 8. 7. *The wiſdom of the fleſh is enmity againſt God, it is not ſubject to the Law, nor can be*: It hath not any Spiritual good, it will not bear the power of the Truth, that would pluck away our corruptions, and take place in us Do not plead ſo much therefore thou art not able, but go to the bottom, thou wouldeſt not be made able, thou would'ſt have thy proud heart, and not be made humble; thou wouldſt have thy looſe heart, and not be purged: when thou art in Hell, and art tormented with theſe, and for theſe, know thou haſt thy will, and therefore why doſt thou complain?

Nay, it is thy diſpoſition to withdraw thy ſelf from thoſe means, and not to give attendance, and leave thy ſelf under the ſtroke of the Word that would take away thy unwillingneſs, *John*, 3. 20. *He that doth evil, hates the Light, and comes not to the Light, he went away ſorrowful*, Matth. 19. 22. *And after that time, many of his Diſciples went away from him, and walked no more with him*, becauſe his words were ſpiritual and piercing, which they could neither hear nor bear.

Not attending for redreſs and help againſt the frowardneſs and perverſneſs of thy heart, it's a juſt and righteous thing with God to ſtake thee down under all thoſe diſtempers, that thou mayeſt be deluded with them, hardened in them, and damned for ever for them, and thou haſt no more than thou haſt righteouſly deſerved, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11. *Becauſe they did not entertain the Truth*

Truth in the love of it, therefore he gave them up to the activity of Error, that they might beleeve lyes; and it's the best Reason that ever yet appeared to my apprehension, why the Woman who in Reason could not but know the Serpent could not speak, yet would and did talk with it: But she had begun before not to love the Truth, being set *to till the Garden, and to keep it*, Gen. 2. that is, to keep the wild beasts out of it; she did not so, therefore God gave her up to be deluded by the Serpent: the like may be said of *Balaams* conference with his Ass; in reason he should have fled from his Ass, not have fallen in conference with him; but when men delight not to *have God in knowledg*, no marvel that he delivers them up *to a reprobate sence*, Rom. 1.

What ever difficulty and impossibility attends thy weakness, thou art the cause of it, and therefore must bear al the evil that is a consequent of it. The Debtor that hath borrowed a Sum of money, at the day of payment, if he shal return this Answer, That the money he borrowed he hath drunk away, whored or played it away; so that having spent his Stock, it's now impossible he should satisfie his Creditor. Doth he not deserve to be punished, not only for his not payment, but for his prodigality which brought that upon him? 3.

The Eight Cavil, whereby our carnal hearts would shift off the Authority and evidence of the Truth, as that it shal not be able to set down the Conscience by an overpowring Conviction, is, *That the sins themselves are* SLIGHT, *of smal consequence, not worthy any such serious consideration, much less any trouble of heart, that should drive a man to a stand, and cause him to sit down in silence and sorrow, as under just condemnation*: Alas, they were but some sudden words, and they were gone and past, and if there were no worse I wis, the world were at a good pass; or they were but the present and inward stirrings of the heart, and the *Shift* 8.

flaſhy thoughts of my mind, no body knew but my ſelf, neither did nor could they hurt any body but my ſelf, and are not thoughts free? Or laſtly, were it a failing in practice, it was but in a petty thing, a very trifle not worth the while to ſpend time to take notice of it; ſome windy words, flaſhy and ſudden thoughts, petty failings, and they are ſo far from troubling the heart, as that they touch it not; ſo far from ſitting down convinced of the evil of theſe, as might break the heart, as that they ſee no weight, nor juſt cauſe at al to burden it, they go away as *Sampſon* with the Gates of *Gaza*, and felt them not.

Anſw. We ſhal therefore take the Severals into ſpecial conſideration, and ſee what hainouſneſs there is in theſe ſins, when they are weighed in the Ballance of the Sanctuary: And we ſhal begin with *Words*, and examine what is the weight of the evil that is in them; and that wil appear in many Particulars.

1. *Look at them in their own Nature abſolutely, thy words have ſuch weight that they are able to ſink thy ſoul into the bottomleſs pit*, and to paſs ſentence of life and death upon thee; for ſo our Savior, *By thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned*, Matth. 12. 37. This is one part of the Inditement upon which the Judgment is executed at the great day by our Savior, *When he ſhall come with ten thouſand thouſands Miniſtring unto him, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongſt them, of all their ungodly deeds, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which they have ſpoken againſt him*, Jude, 14. 15. Thoſe harſh Expreſſions, the unkind language, curriſh, rugged, and cutting Speeches, whereby they would daunt and kil the hearts of the Saints; the ſecret ſcorns, and contempts, and reproaches, whereby they have toſſed the names of the Saints in their Meetings, Merriments, and upon their Ale-benches; happily there is no man beſides thy mates that hears

hears thee, no witness can accuse thee, no Judg that can pass Sentence: The Lord Jesus he comes for this end, and thou art the man, and thy speeches are the matter of thy Inditement; of these he wil convince thee, and for these execute Judgment upon thee at that great day, he wil make thee sit down in silence, he wil stop that wicked mouth of thine, thou shalt not have a word to speak for thy self then: this is the Charge that the Lord puts in against such wretched Hypocrites, who think to carry al things covertly and cunningly that no man may lay hold of them; the Lord puls them out by the pole, *Psal.* 50. 19. *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit:* It is his Trade, his lips are the forge of falsehood, his mouth is as it were the mint of lying reproaches, of back-biting, he sits at it, keeps his shop, it's the sale and ware that is vented upon al occasions, when his Companions, as his Chapmen, come to buy: So the Text, *Thou satest and spakest against thine own mothers son, &c. these things thou hast done,* the Lord keeps these words upon Record, and sets them in order at the day of Judgment, *Oh consider this,* you do not now consider, the Lord doth, *and he will tear you in pieces,* as you have torn the names of his Servants by your taunts and reproaches; and in truth it's no marvel, for thy language and customary speech gives a tast of the temper of thy soul and spiritual condition, and is a sad evidence of thy corrupt and graceless estate, *James* 1. 16. *If any seem to be Religious, and bridleth not his tongue, the Religion of that man is vain;* his language loose and froathy, his words peevish and frampful, froward and scornful, the Religion of that man is not worth a rush, his prayers are vain, his hearing vain, his profession he wil never do good with it, never receive good or benefit from it: As we say of Money, the sound of it shews whether it be pure or base, true or counterfeit, it sounds like Brass or Copper, it's certainly counterfeit, it hath not the sound of silver, or as

we ſay of Bels, the ring of them diſcovers whether they be of baſe matter, or of right bel-mettal; ſo here, a mans ſpeech is the diſcoverer of a mans Spirit. *If his heart be the Inditer of a good matter, the tongue will be as the pen of a ready Writer*, Pſal. 45. 1. Thoſe words that come from Grace in the ſpeaker, wil adminiſter Grace to the hearers; empty words do ſhew an empty heart. Thou art one of thoſe, and thy ſpeech bewraies thee, ſaid they to *Peter*: A jeering and ſcoffing tongue is a note of an Iſmaelite; by that *Iſmael* was diſcovered to be of the fleſh, *Gal.* 4. In a word, as a ſtinking breath argues a corrupt Stomach and rotten Lungs; ſo it is with baſe and vain language, it argues a corrupt and rotten heart: As light therefore as thou conceiveſt theſe vain and windy words of thine, thou wilt one day find the load of them ſo heavy, that they wil be like a Mill-ſtone to ſink thee down into irrecoverable deſtruction, ſo that thy life and death lies in thy words as little as thou makeſt of them.

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Look at them with reſpect to OTHERS, caſt them into the Ballance of Compariſon and Conſideration, with the evil of others, and thereby the greatneſs of their evil wil more evidently appear: I anſwer therfore in the ſecond place, The evil of thy words is in ſome regard, I ſay, *in ſome regard*, worſe than the evil of thy heart; though that be the Store-houſe and Treaſury of noyſom diſtempers, and the Ware-houſe which furniſheth a mans whol courſe, yet corrupt language ads a deeper dye, and makes thoſe evils of the heart more loathſom: As there is more ſtore of Commodities in the Ware-houſe, yet the falſe light of the Shop makes them ſo much the worſe, becauſe it makes them not appear as they are; words darkens much of the Truth that is in the heart, which would make againſt ſin, and covers and colers over that which is evil, that it might not appear to be ſuch, that the heart purpoſeth and concludes certainly it wil have it, becauſe it likes it: yet could a man

man but hear the privy Verdict which knowledg and conſcience gives, 1. He ſhould ſee them conſenting to the Truth: 2. Condemning the wil of ſin. Reaſon tels the heart, this is the way and the will of God, and you ſhould not reject it; this is your Duty, and Gods Command, you periſh for it if you do oppoſe; here Truth appears as wel as diſtempers. But when the Cauſe comes to be ſcanned and pleaded outwardly by words, the tongue hides the verdict of knowledg and conſcience, ſuffers not their teſtimony, or the Truth once to come to light. But the corruption that the heart would have, it pleads for it under the color and pretence of that which is Lawful and allowable; So much light and knowledg as would diſcover the ſin that is ſuppreſſed. The evil that was there ſuppreſſed, that is by color of cunning and falſe words, varniſhed over, and pleaded for under pretence of that which is good and Lawful. So that here is a double evil more in our words than in our hearts.

1. A Silencing of the Truth, when the teſtimony of Judgment and Conſcience muſt not come to light.

2. Coloring of the loathſomneſs of ſin that it might not appear like it ſelf, by the paint and varniſh of lying words. Thus ſome tranſlate that of *James*, and though it be not the ful meaning, yet I ſee not but it is part of the meaning; *The tongue is a world of evil*, James, 3. 6. *is an ornament of evil*, when lying language puts fair colors and pretences upon foul and unlawful practices. So the paint of words hides the foul viſage of ſin. Thus you ſhal obſerve in the Scribes and Phariſees, *Acts*, 4. 16, 17. *It's manifeſt to all, and cannot be denied; yet that it ſpread no further, let us ſtreightly threaten them that they ſpeak no more in this name.* If their Conſciences might have been heard to ſpeak, they would have teſtefied that the wonder is great, and argues the Finger of God, and the worth of the men, and that it ſhould be publiſhed, and God honored;

nored; but their tongue turnes it another way, this man is but an Impoſtor, his name muſt not be had in regard, his perſon in reſpect, ſo it was with them they would have forced the blind man to have ſpoken againſt our Savior *John* 9. 24. *This man is a ſinner give Glory to God* and ſo endeavored to have him deny the truth of the miracle, which in their own hearts they did undoubtedly acknowledge; ſo it was with the falſe witneſſes packed by *Jezabel*, let Conſcience be examined and ſuffered to give in evidence and you ſee the truth, Did *Nabal blaſpheme God and the King?* no, is he *worthy to dy*? no, Is it not treachery for any to plot and pretend this? It is ſo, ſaies Conſcience there is no truth at all but treacherie; but their falſe tongues hide the truth, and put an appearance of truth upon that which is falſe.

2. *Somtimes a man out of an ignorant cuſtom or neglect holds forth more evil in his words, than he either conceives or attends in his own apprehenſion*, this is uſual amongſt Children converſing with naughty and leud company, they ſpeak the evil words they hear frequently with their mates when they know not what they ſpeak, or what the words imply that they ſpeak. It may poſſibly be conceived that many of thoſe children who cryed to *Eliſha come down thou bald pate*, 2 *Kings* 2. 23. ſpake what was commonly ſaid amongſt their Parents, not knowing the evil of the words they ſpake.

3. *All the while the evil is Confined and concealed in the cloſet of the heart it's not dangerous, nor yet infectious to any, but only to the ſoul of the party that harbours it.* But when the wickedneſs of the heart walks abroad in our words, and communication it conveyes a taint and pollution with it; And herein lyes a greater evil: in our words than in our hearts in point of infection, the heart is like a dunghil of noyſom abominations, but our ſpeech and words let out the ſteem of it, which is able to annoy all that are in preſence or paſs

paſs by with the ſtench of it.

Compare the evil of our words with our practice alſo, & it wil appear that in many particulars the ſcales wil be caſt this way, and the loathſomneſs of the evil wil ly here. 3.

Our words are as it were the panders and provokers, more univerſally to al kinds of evil than our practice can be; There be many ſins that come not within the compaſs of our practice as errours, falſe opinions, and thoſe that do they come not within our power or poſſibility for the while. But there is no error ſo groſs, no deluſion ſo loathſom but our ſpeech can vent and broach it. No practice ſo vile but by our words and communication we can preſent it together with al the occaſion to the heart to draw forth thoſe ſinful inclinations there, to linger after and to ſeek for opportunity to commit it 1 *Cor.* 15. 33. *Evil words corrupt good manners* and the Apoſtle ſpecifies none but implies a taint and pollution of al, the ſting of the Serpent we know ſpreads over the whol body, taints al the blood at an inſtant, ſo there is the *poyſon of Aſps that is under the lips of the ungodly*, So the Apoſtle James 3. 6. *the tongue amongſt the members defiles the whol body*, Conference and Communication affects the whol man, ſtirrs up the heart to effect, the head to plot, the eye to look, the hand to work &c. Speech drives the chollerick man into a paſſion the melancholick man into diſcontent, the looſe and vain perſon to be tranſported with his luſts, and uncleanneſs. Therfore the ſame Apoſtle compares it to a fire verſ. 5. *Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth* a ſpark of fire ſets a whol houſe a whol town on a flame, before one be aware. 1.

As words taint more univerſally *ſo they are of greater force and prevail more powerfully draw more effectually to the commiſſion of evil*; the ſin is committed and the commiſſion leaves a ſcandalous example behind it, and that as it were paſſively and in ſilence preſents itſelf 2.

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to the memory of him that attends it. but our words *do not paſſively preſent a thing to the view of another, but awaken him and work upon*, and actively, and prevailingly cal out any inclination to an evil, and that with inſtance and overbearing importunity. Examples only offer the bait if the heart wil nibble and take it but words & perſwaſions take hold upon a man, and wil have no nay before they obtain their intent, ſo the Adulterous woman *Prov.* 7. 21. *with much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield, with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him*, ſo Judg. 16. 16. *Dalilah* layd ſiege and made battery at the heart of *Sampſon*, at laſt wearied him out and wrought him to her own wil and his ruine, an evil example is like the preſenting of an army before a place and ſummoning of it, but ſpech is like a conſtant beleaguring of a City which wil force it to ſurrender and therefore I have ever judged it more dangerous to live with a perſon of an il language than of an evil life, becauſe a mans practice wil be but ſeldom and occaſional and mainly an enticement to ſome one kind of evil, but ſpeech purſues a man with variety of enticements words are arrowes, and he that ſhoots a whol quiver wil hardly miſs but wound with ſome or other at the laſt.

3. *The evil of the tongue is a kind of reſtleſs unweariable untameable wickedneſs*, the practice of ſin is ſuch that ſomtimes a mans years permit not the purſuit of it, or the time ſuits not, or the place fits not, or a mans ability and ſtrength makes unapt and wholly unable to take it up, ſo nature deſires eaſe and reſt, and the commiſſion of ſin is at an end, the Thief muſt leave his trade of robbing, the Drunkard his company, the Adulterer his luſts, when age and ſickneſs comes in upon him and their able ſtrength is now ſpent. But the evil of the tongue begins with a man in his tender years, when the child knowes not the miſtery of ſin nor yet hath ability to practice it, yet he can prate and talk of it. this

grows

grows up with him to his riper years, and when his ſtrength and nature decayes and a man grows towards his grave yet the evil of his tongue grows lively and active; and when a wretch is able to do nothing yet then is he able to read lectures of villany, and wickedneſs which he hath learned in his life and practiced in the leudneſs of his carriage from his youth. As it is with old Huntſmen when their legs fail that they cannot follow the game, yet they wil ſit and hear the cry and lewr after the hounds, when they can do little elſe. So here, This I take to be the meaning of that of *James* which exerciſeth the apprehenſions of interpreters, and its mervailous hard to find the ful mind of God therin, *James.* 3. 6. *It ſets on fire the whol courſe of nature and it ſelf is ſet on fire of Hel.* i. e. by the helliſh deluſions and temptations of Satan.

Two things I ſuppoſe are ſpecially implied in the text.

1. The violence and untameableneſs of this evil cannot be ſtopped, it carries al before it; not onely propounds a temptation unto evil, but counſels, yea commands; if not that, entreats; if that take not place, purſues al theſe, perſeveres to importune, til the importunity kindles in the heart like a mighty flame which cannot be quenched. So when *Demetrius* had preſſed his companions with ſuch prevailing arguments of profit Sirs, you know that by this trade we have our liveing preſently they were al upon a flame, and the voyce prevayled by the ſpace of two hours, *Great is Diana of the Epheſians. Acts.* 19. 28. when they heard thoſe ſayings ſo they were kindled and carried away with *Herods* ſpeech, *the voyce of God, and not of man Acts.* 12. 22.

2. This untameable evil of the tongue hath not his dates and periods, his ſpring and fal as it were, *but ſets on fire the whol courſe of nature*, i. e. grows up with us from our beginnings, and goes along with us in our daily

courſe until we ly down in our graves. When children can know nothing nor learn to do nothing, yet they wil eaſily take in naughty words and tattle them when they know not what they talk. In a word this is the ful meaning, ſo near as I can gueſs, whereas the feebleneſs of our childhood unfits us for the knowing and practicing of ſome evil, our riper years frees us from ſome, as childiſh ſports and vanities, decrepit age utterly diſenables us to moſt, the untameable evil of our tongues, ſends in a veyn and currant of wickedneſs, through our whol courſe, the folly and feebleneſs of our child-hood unfits us not for this, or our riper years frees us not, but ſuch count it as ſuitable to their condition, our decrepit age hinders us not, but the vanity of the tongue caſts a venom through al, nor is a man wearied with ſuch wickedneſs as that he craves end or eaſe, but is as freſh at night as he was in the morning, in his youth as he was in his childhood, in his decaying age as he was in his riper yeers. This helliſh fire finds fewel and matter to nouriſh it in a mans whol courſe, therefore it's ſayd *it's ſet on fire of Hell.* Becauſe our natures are eaſily tainted with this poyſon and takes it in almoſt unawares, you cannot keep children from learning the language eſpecially thats nought which they hear, nor can you force them to leave it or forget it, they grow up to ripenes and readineſs in it without either care or pains, *Joſeph* ſwears, the Court oath, and the children ſpeak half Aſhdod and half Hebrew.

4. That thou mayeſt ſee how far thou art deceived in ſlighting the evil of thy words, *know if there be any evil in the world it is in manner and meaſure in them* James 3. 6. *the tongue is a world of evil,* an Univerſity, an Univerſality of al wickedneſs in it, and its an Ornament of al evil beſides, (the word wil carry both, and I would include both) what ever evil is on earth amongſt men, in Hell amongſt Devils and the damned, what ever wickedneſs the manners of al Countries have invented

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the Condition of al men have practiſed, or the hearts and heads of men contrived the tongue ſhares in al theſe. It's the chief ſecretary to al eſtates of ſin and ſinners, the Interpreter of mens minds & Tranſlator of theſe evils betwixt man and man. In a word, what ever evil is in the heart or mind of a mans ſelf, the tongue hath vented it, whatſoever hath been done by others, ſeen or obſerved, the tongue hath related, reported it. It's that which wil cover al the foulneſs, excuſe or leſſen the loathſomneſs of the moſt vile evils, hath varniſhed and decked over the moſt deteſtable practices with ſome pretences of liberty or indifferency hath been the Lawyer which hath undertook to plead the cales of the vileſt waies of evil that ever were.

Having ſeen the vileneſs of ſinful words; *Now let us proceed to conſider of our* THOUGHTS, *the firſt ſtirrings of the diſtempers of our hearts that ſuddenly and preſently vaniſh away, men imagine there cannot be ſuch evil in them, nor are they to charge themſelves ſo deeply for them as Miniſters would bear them in hand.* No man ſay they can ſee or know the thoughts of our hearts, & therfore they cannot be offenſive or ſcandalous to any and therefore its not poſſible they ſhould be diſcouraged from doing any good they deſire or intend, or provoked to the practice of any evil that may be dangerous to themſelves or diſhonourable to the Lord. beſides they appear not ſo ſoon to our apprehenſions but they paſs away in an inſtant, and are as though they had never been, and what great evil is in the, and why ſhould the ſoul be ſo deeply affected with them and the ſinner be forced to feel ſo great ſorrow for them? this is to make them worſe than they are, and our ſelves more miſerable than we ſhould be. 2.

The evil of thy thoughts and ſtirrings of the diſtempers of thy heart are hidden and ſpiritual, and they paſs away before thou canſt perceive them, much leſs judg of them aright, but didſt thou but ſee them as they Anſw.

are, and upon thorough ſearch couldſt truly find out the bottom of that baſeneſs and filth that is there, they would appear exceeding loathſom and hainous to thine own apprehenſion, as he ſaid, *the ſin of the ſoul, is the ſoul of ſin.* The ſin of the body, is the body and carkaſs of corruption; that is, in the ſinful motions of the ſoul, of the mind and heart, there is the life, poyſon, and power of corruption, putting forth it ſelf in the utmoſt activity of the venom and malignity of it. The Actions of the Body are tainted with the pollution of ſin by conſent, as the diſtempers of the mind and heart appear in them, and are acted by them; the body is as it were an acceſſary in the evil and wickedneſs; the mind is the principal, that contrives all, uſeth only the body as an Inſtrument to vent its own venom and wickedneſs by.

More eſpecially ſee the hainouſneſs of the evil of thy Thoughts and Heart, in the Particulars following.

I. Firſt, *In regard of God. The ſinful poyſon of thy thoughts, doth eſtrange thee from God, carry thee in profeſſed oppoſition againſt him; ſo that the ſinner comes by this means to reſiſt the Almighty, as it were to his very face.*

Let me open both theſe in a few words.

1. *Thy inordinate thoughts takes thee off from yielding attendance to the Lord, that thou falleſt off from him, and the guidance of his wiſdom in the Rule, before thou falleſt into any ſin*: Here came in the firſt breach between God and the ſoul, and by this the breach is continued and encreaſed dayly in our departings from him. *This I know* (ſaith the wiſe man) *that God made man right, but he ſought out many inventions*, or *findings*, Eccleſ. 7. laſt. He was made for God, and ſhould have eyed him directly, and kept himſelf under the operative diſpenſation of his ſpiritual Government, in which he would not have been awanting to him, but he would

would have carried him to his end, and kept him ſo in happineſs, that is, carried him to himſelf, and kept him with himſelf for ever. *But he found out findings*; ſo the words. When he ſhould have looked to the wil of God as the Compaſs only appointed to ſtere his courſe by, he ſhould have looked to the Law which the Lord had found out as the line and level of his life, which would not have failed to have led him to his Duty, and quickened him in it. He was not content with the Rule and way that God had found out, but he finds out an Invention out of the vanity of his mutable mind, looks to that, and is wholly led aſide by that from the Lord. So that when he ſhould go from Rule to Rule, for the guidance of his dayly courſe, he goes from one vanity to another, from one vain thought to another, from one device to another; as they ſaid, *let us deviſe Devices*. As in a wel ordered Army, break the Rank in one place, and ye bring ruin and confuſion upon the whol: Here was the right order in which we were made, and we ſhould have kept Rank and File; the mind and judgment ſhould only have attended God; the Will attend our Judgment, the Affections wait on the Will, the Actions iſſue as the execution of al. Here Satan routed *Adam*, brake this Rank upon the firſt onſet, takes off the Mind from attending the Covenant, Command, and Direction of the Lord, *The day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die*, and liſtens to the deluſions and forgery of Satan, *Ye ſhall not die at all*; and ſo fals into the commiſſion of the ſin, which brought condemnation upon him and his whol poſterity; and as the breach came in thus between God and the ſoul, ſo it's dayly made greater by this means. As a man once having miſſed his way, the further he wanders, the further he goes from the right way. Such is the ravelling of our own imaginations, we loſe our ſelves the longer we continue in them. After we are overborn with the hurry of our thoughts, we are at a loſs with our ſelves, forget God, his

his Promises, our Directions and Comforts cannot tel where to find our hearts. This the Apostle gives as the fountain and first cause of those overflowing evils, and fearful back-slidings from God, *Ephes.* 4. 17. *The Gentiles walk in the vanity of their minds, and so become strangers from the life of God.* Thus *David* by the sinful devices of his own mind departs so far from God, that he cannot find any evidence of his Love, or sence and feeling of his favor; he plots the commission of the sin, then the covering of it, therefore sends for *Uriah*, would have sent him to his house; when that took not, but resolves the contrary, then he plots his drunkenness that he might forget his resolution; when that succeeds not, he sends him back to the Army, and delivered him up to the hand of the Enemy in the issue. So by inordinate attendance to unruly thoughts, the sinner is taken aside so strangely from the Lord, and so overwhelmed with the guilt and pollution of sin, that partly he dare not, and many times is so bewildred and estranged, that he knows not how to recover himself, and come home to God.

2. *The evil of our thoughts carries the soul in professed opposition against God*; for it is by the Spiritual Operations and Actions of our minds that we meet with the Lord, and have a kind of intercourse with the Almighty, who is a Spirit. For al outward things are for the body, the body for the soul, the soul is nextly for God, and therefore meets as really with him in the Actions of Understanding, as the Eye meets with the Light in Seeing; which no other Creature can do, nor no action of a bodily Creature doth. Our Sences in their sinful and inordinate swervings, when they become means and inlets of evil from their objects, they meet with the Creature firstly, and there make the jar: It's the beauty of the Object that stirs up to lust by the Eye, the daintiness of the Diet that provokes to intemperance by the tast, the harsh and unkind language that provokes

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to wrath and impatience by the Ear: But the Mind and Underſtanding toucheth the Lord directly, meets with his Rule, and with God acting in the way of his Government there, and when it goes off from the Rule as before, and attends its own vanity and folly, it juſtles with the Almighty, ſtands in open defyance and reſiſtance againſt him. This alſo appeared in *Adams* ſin out of the folly of his own deluded thoughts, he would have unthroned the Almighty, and hoped by Satans Counſels to ſet himſelf in the room of God: *Ye ſhall be as gods, knowing good and evil*, Gen. 3. and he ſaw it to be good to get knowledg, and ſo purchaſe a Deity to himſelf, and ſo put it to tryal: thus the wicked openly profeſs, *They ſay to the Almighty, depart from us, we deſire not the knowledg of thy waies*, Job, 21. when they deſire not to have the wiſdom of God rule in their minds, but ſet up their own fooliſh imaginations, they ſay then to God, depart from us; they ſhake off the Authority of the Truth, and with that the Soveraignty of the Lord himſelf and his Government: Hence the Apoſtle, *Colloſ.* 1. 21. *They were Enemies*, and where lay that enmity? *in their minds*, in their διανοια, *in their Diſcourſe*, in the exerciſe of the largeſt act of their Underſtandings, wherein the uſe of the whol faculty appears, and this enmity appears in the fruit of it, which wil undoubtedly follow, namely, *evil works*. Hence *Rom.* 8. 7. the wiſdom of the fleſh is ſaid to be enmity againſt God; not an enemy to him that would ſomtimes croſs and oppoſe him, but *Enmity*, the whol being and working of it is carried in conſtant oppoſition againſt the Law. And upon this ground it is when the Apoſtle *Peter* would ſhew *Simon Magus* the hainouſneſs of his ſin, he ſtaies not in the outward expreſſion, but cals him directly to conſider the thoughts of his heart, where that blaſphemous language was minted, and from whence it proceeded. When *Simon* ſaw that by laying on of the hands of the Apoſtles, the holy Ghoſt

Ghoſt was given, he perceived how he might get a booty, and therefore he fel to bargain, tries the Market, what ſhal I give? &c. The Apoſtle carried with a zealous indignation againſt ſo vile a demand, which caſt ſo much contempt and contumely upon the holy Spirit, and the gift thereof, anſwers with a holy diſdain, and denounceth a Curſe. *Thy money periſh with thee*, q. d. thou art in a periſhing condition, and this money of thine which thou conceiveſt wil further thy proceedings, wil periſh alſo; yet he ads a caution for his recovery: *Oh pray, if it be poſſible, that the thought of thy heart may be forgiven*, Acts, 8. 22,23. q.d. Thy ſin is ſo hainous, ſo execrable, ſo deteſtable, it's almoſt paſt al poſſibility of pardon, it's not in the tongue which uttered the word, nor in the hand which offered the money, nor yet ſo much in thine eye that ſaw the work done, for all theſe met not ſo directly, ſo immediately with the Lord. The words were propounded to the Apoſtles, the money ſhould have been payed to them; but Oh, it was the helliſh villany of his mind and apprehenſion which did ſo baſely eſteem of the gifts of Gods Spirit, as if they might be valued or purchaſed with money. He did ſo conceive, as if the holy Spirit of Grace ſhould Lackey after his luſts, and be at the beck and command of ſuch a proud rebellious wretch, as that it ſhould be diſpoſed and diſpenſed according to his will and humor. This was in his mind and thought, and this made it ſo hainous an evil, that the Apoſtle put it to a may be, *if it be poſſible*; ſo that the helliſh evil of our imaginations, and curſed contrivements of our thoughts, may put a man almoſt beyond poſſibility of pardon: So in the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, it's ſaid, our Savior *ſaw their thoughts*, Mat. 12. ver. 25. thoſe gave in evidence of the direfulneſs and inconceivable hainouſneſs of thoſe contumelious ſpeeches againſt our Savior, when they ſaid, *He caſteth out Devils by Belzebub the Prince of Devils*; It is not ſaid he heard their words, though blaſphemous, but

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he ſaw their thoughts, they iſſued out of their apprehenſions, their thoughts being calm and quiet, it was not ſome baſe pang or paſſion; but when they had no provocation, their own thoughts carried them againſt the evidence of all Truth, meerly out of the venom of their own hearts. This was unpardonable blaſphemy; and in truth there is no Creature but a reaſonable Creature that can cloſe not with the Creature only, but with God in his Rule, that can ſin, nor is there any ſin properly but where the mind and heart is an Ingredient in it. So the raviſhed Maid, though her body was abuſed, yet her perſon was not charged as guilty of ſin, nor ſhe polluted therewith, becauſe her judgment was not there aſſenting, nor her heart yielding thereunto.

Look at thoughts in regard of al the other evils of our lives which are acted, and appear in our dayly courſe, we may thence come to take a gueſs at the greatneſs of the evil of our thoughts, *for it will appear they are the cauſes of all other evils, and therefore it cannot but be concluded there is more and worſe evil in them than in all the reſt.* A mans imaginations are the forge of villany, where it's al framed, the Ware-houſe of wickedneſs, the Magazine of al miſchief and iniquity, whence the ſinner is furniſhed to the commiſſion of al evil, in his ordinary courſe; the Sea of abominations, which overflows into al the Senſes, and they are polluted into all the parts of the body, and they are defiled and carried aſide with many noyſom corruptions, *Matth.* 15. 19. *Out of the heart comes murders, adulteries, thefts*; there is the neſt where al theſe noyſom vermine are bred, *Matth.* 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the tongue ſpeaks*, and the hand works: If there be pride and ſnappiſhneſs in a mans ſpeech, ſtubbornneſs in a courſe, covetouſneſs in a mans Converſation, there is abundance of al theſe, and more than theſe within. The Imagination of our mind is the great Wheel that carries al with it; That loathſom and execrable wickedneſs, 2.

worſe than which the Sun never ſaw, the Earth never bore (that unpardonable ſin excepted) the killing of the Lord Jeſus the Lord of Life, the ſeed of it was, *a thought caſt by Satan into the heart of* Judas, *John*, 13. 3. it was warmed with a covetous diſpoſition, and ſo brought forth that hideous treachery, the betraying of the Lord Jeſus.

If blaſphemy be evil in the tongue that utters it, is it not worſe in the heart that indites it? Wickedneſs in our actions and ſpeeches, are but the brats and brood of our minds and hearts, there they were conceived and faſhioned in al the parts and proportions of wickedneſs as in the womb, a mans practice doth but like the Midwife, bring them into the world, into open view, it makes the evil appear, but evil in the very hainouſneſs was there before: Nay, the Mind hath not a hand in the plotting only of al theſe evils, but it puts forth a ſpecial power in the execution of the works, which otherwiſe would be at a ſtand. The mind doth not only conceive, but it travels for deliverance, and brings it forth into action; that is the meaning of the place which carries both depth of difficulty and excellency in it, *Iſai.* 5.18. *There is a Generation which draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with Cart-ropes.* We wil open two things here.

1. What theſe Cords and Cart-ropes are.
2. How they draw.

Firſt, Cords are, Counſels, falſe pleas, forged and plauſible pretences, which are ordered and contrived as though they were twiſted together as a Cord, ſtrongly to perſwade and prevail, and they are *Cords of vanity*, which the vanity and miſguided apprehenſion of carnal reaſon hath twiſted. *Cart-ropes* have the ſame ſence, only with this aggravation, it implies more ſtrength and ſubtilty; the moſt ſedulous contrivements, the moſt ſubtil and reſtleſs underminings of colorable excuſes that may take off al the ſtrength of argument that oppoſe the way,

way, or inconvenience that might hinder the work, ſo that they carry al before them; Thus God is ſaid *to cut the Cords of the wicked*, Pſal. 129. 4. when they drew their Plow over the backs of the righteous.

To draw iniquity, is by the ſtrength of cunning contrivements, the greateſt ſubtilty of the moſt fained pretences that carnal Reaſon can coin; by theſe I ſay prevailingly to perſwade, and carry even without fear or oppoſition to the practice of ſin, that is to draw, &c. that look when the Load is at a ſtand, and the Cart at a ſtall, they ſet more force to it, and draw it out notwithſtanding al difficulty and reſiſtance to the contrary: So here. Thus the unjuſt Steward, *Luke*, 16. 3, 4. he ſaid within himſelf, I am reſolved what to do: Thus the Harlot when the yong man ſeemed not willing to liſten to her firſt Allurements, but came on heavily, ſhe put to her Cart-rope, and plucked him by force, *Prov.* 7. 14. 21. See the contrivings of her carnal reaſonings as the twiſtings of ſo many Cords to make even a Cart-rope, to hale him with a kind of violence to this villany: Arguments ſhe uſeth to perſwade him, impediments ſhe removes that may hinder him: Her Arguments are ſubtil, and ſecretly contrived, ſhe pretends (which is not common amongſt Harlots) her Profeſſion, yea, ſerious practice of Religion, *ſhe had Peace-offerings with her*, that is, the remainders of them, and ſo proviſion, and that in a plentiful manner for her ſupport; and that which was more, then *ſhe had offered her free-will Offerings*, that of purpoſe ſhe came to meet him, that God in providence had put the opportunity into her hands, *Lo, I have found thee*, and that al conveniences and contents are fitted at home: As touching any inconveniency that might be ſuſpected or feared, that coaſt is cleer, *the good man is not at home*; and thus ſhe forceth him with falſe pretences. So the Prophet declares the prevailing power of carnal Reaſonings, that they carry a man uncontrolably in his courſe that he cannot be

ſtopped, *Iſai.* 50. laſt. Hence it is the wiſe man paſſeth Sentence of a mans eſtate by the common rode of his thoughts. As the mind is, the man is; as the frame and conſtant ſtirring of the heart, ſo is his eſtate and condition; *Prov.* 12. 2. *A good man obtaineth favor of the Lord, but a man of wicked devices will be condemn,* becauſe ſuch a man is an ungodly man, who muſt not look to find favor with him, or acceptance from him.

3. Again, *Look we at the large extent of this ſpiritual wickedneß of the mind, which cannot be bounded; the unavoidableneß of it, it cannot be prevented; and in both we ſhall ſee, and be forced to confeß the aggravation of this evil*: There is a compaſs wherein a mans words and actions may be confined, a man cannot vent the venom of his words, or expreſs his poyſonous and wretched practices amongſt all men, not amongſt many, many times; but there are no limits nor bounds to be ſet to the thoughts of a mans mind, or the luſts and deſires of the heart. Were a man never ſo ful of malice and hatred, he cannot murder many; happily he dare not adventure upon one, but yet his mind can plot, and his heart deſire, and both privily aſſent and approve the the deſtruction of many millions, yea, moſt of the world at one clap: as the Tyrant that wiſhed that all in *Rome* had but one neck, that he might cut it off at a blow. Herein is the extent of the murder of the mind; this may be multiplied and acted every hour of the day, and each minute of an hour. The Adulterous mate hath not liberty, and it may be not poſſibility to ſatisfie his luſt by commiſſion of it with one whom his heart is carried after, yet he can luſt after her, and many thouſands more, and the thoughts of the mind can inwardly conceit the villany, and give aſſent to it; and this is the Adultery of the heart, this may be acted and continued each moment of the day. So that there is an endleſs, boundleſs kind of infinitneſs in this evil of the mind, it

meets

meets with an infinite God, and ſo ſwerves in an infinite manner from him.

Again in an ordinary courſe, and look at the power of the Creature, it cannot be ſtopped nor hindred, we may gag the tongue, manacle the hands, fetter the feet, and ſo prevent their actions, yet in al places, at al times upon al occaſions in al companies, let all men do what they can, the thoughts will be working, and the affections of the heart ſtirring after ſuch evils as they be addicted to.

4. *As the evils of our whol courſe have their riſe and cauſe from our thoughts, ſo are they nouriſhed alſo hereby*: Our imaginations are the womb where wickedneſs is conceived; So are they alſo the breaſts and dugs where they are maintained and nurſed up, the ſinews of the ſtrength of our diſtempers lie in the luſtings of our mind and heart; when the ſoul ſucks the ſweet of a diſtemper by dayly meditation, lies at the dug as it were, *draws out the Spirits* and Quinteſſence of any noyſom luſts and temptations, by dayly attendance, beſtowing his mind and thoughts thereupon; whence the ſoul comes to be incorporated into a luſt, and wholly under the ſtrength and power of it, So that though the evil is not outward and ſcandalous, yet it becomes more hainous in the ſight of God: as it is in diſtillations, the ſpirits of Wine, and ſome drops of Chymical Oyl, are of more force than a great part of the ſubſtance taken in the groſsneſs of its Nature, and do more cheer and quicken, and comfort in a cordial manner: So it is in the ſoul, by the dayly muſing and acting of our thoughts, upon the occaſion of any corruption preſented; our Meditation is the diſtillation which draws out the Spirits of pride or paſſion, or luſts, and becomes marvelouſly confirmed in theſe, and tranſported by theſe to our ſpiritual prejudice, they grow ſtrong in us, and we under the power of them; thus *Jonah* while he ſits down in a muddy diſtemper and attends the vanity of his own thoughts,

thoughts, he growes drunk with his paſſion, ſo that he neither knows God nor himſelf; not only doing that which is naught, but he wil defend that which he doth, *I do well to be angry unto the death*, ſaies he. Hence it is the Apoſtle ſuggeſts that Caution, *Rom.* 13. laſt, *Make no proviſion for the fleſh*; the Meditation and muſing of our minds, is the plentiful proviſion we make for the welcoming and maintaining of any diſtemper: when we let our thoughts looſe to view the compaſs o any harſh carriage, and injurious dealing, we make proviſion for anger and revenge, and the heart comes to be carried with violence of wrath and rage; Thus and thus he dealt with me, ſo unkindly, ſo injurioufly, and that to my diſparagement in the preſence of ſuch; and this ſets him al on a flame: when we pore upon our infirmities and weakneſſes we provide for diſcouragements, and we ſit and ſink down under them, and ſo ſtrengthen thoſe corruptions, that otherwiſe have received their deaths wounds, and would be weakened and waſt away. As it is with old decayed Bodies which are ſubject to fainting fits, and are ever and anon ſwooning away, the powring in of ſome Cordial Water wil fetch them up again, and ad new ſtrength and cheer. The *Fleſh* here, is original corruption; the *old Man*, which in the Saints is dying away, and decaying dayly, but our Meditation puts as it were *Aqua vitæ* into the old mans mouth, adds vigor afreſh, and ſomtimes makes it with violence to prevail.

5. Laſtly, while the ſwarmes of vain imaginations keep through-fare in our minds and the noyſom ſteems of ſinful affections are riſing, boyling, and bubling in our boſomes, *there is little expectation that the power of any meanes ſhould come in upon the ſoul or prevayl with it for good*, the croud of imaginations ſtop the paſſage ſo that there is no comming to ſpeech with the ſoul, the hurries of heart to tranſport it and take up the whol ſtrength of it, that it can neither attend nor ſtay upon any

any thing beſides, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. therefore called *the ſtrong hould*, where Satan intrencheth, and fortifyeth himſelf againſt al the means of Grace that may caſt him out, for while the ſtream of the thoughts are turned another way, the ear hears nothing, the underſtanding minds nothing, the heart embraceth nothing, there is no place or room there, and thence it is, as our Saviour ſpeaks, *the word cannot take place in them*, John. 8. 37. therefore the prophets advice to Jeruſalem when he would have her clenſed and ſaved, he directs her to diſlodge her vain thoughts, *waſh thy heart O thou Jeruſalem that mayeſt be ſaved, how long ſhal vain thoughts lodg within thee Jer.* 4. 14. thoſe vain thoughts are thoſe carnal reaſonings whereby the ſinner would put bye the authority of the truth, that ſo the ſinner might neither ſee the loathſomneſs of his ſin, nor the danger of his eſtate, or the neceſſity to recover himſelf out of it, and if theſe thoughts lodg in him there wil be no entertainment for the power of any ordinance or counſel that wil take place with him, nor reproof awe, nor exhortation perſwade, he caſts out and keeps off any thoughts of any neceſſity to be waſhed, and ſo to be ſaved. If then by thoſe vain thoughts thy heart is eſtranged from God, and carryed in oppoſition, againſt him, If they be the cauſe of al ſins committed and continued in, if the hindrance of al means that might procure our God, then is their evil exceeding hainous and therefore we ſhould ſo judg it and ſo be effected with it.

3. *Wee come now to ſpeak of a third particular alleadged to excuſe ſin and to ſhew the ſlight eſteem the ſoul hath of it*, viz. *ſuppoſe the failing was in practice, yet becauſe the matter or thing wherin the offence was committed was but* SMALL, *men look at it as a petty buſineß, a very trifle, not worthy the taking notice of*, and therefore account it as an argument of folly and childiſh weakneſs to be troubled with ſo ſlight a thing, or to have

have the heart deeply affected with it more than the matter deſerves, and a man in reaſon ſhould. It was but taking of a penny or ſhilling too much, putting off a cracked Commodity without ſuſpicion by ſlight of hand; lazying out a mans time, ever ſeem to be doing and yet do little; out-bid a man in a bargain by a wile, and he never the wiſer; theſe are but tricks of wit matters of no conſequence, and what needs Conſcience be troubled for theſe? a man is never the worſe for them why ſhould he judg the worſe of himſelf or his condition? ſuch moats in a mans coat make it never a whit the more unſeemly, ſuch poore petty things in a mans carriage, makes it never a whit the more uncomfortable, As the eye of man happily diſcerns not theſe things, the Law cannot reach them nor the magiſtrate puniſh them, why ſhould any man puniſh himſelf or be a torment and rack to his Conſcience for them? The things are little and petty.

Anſw. *The leſs the things are more hainous thy fault is, and the greater thy guilt* as it thus appears. *The leſs* LOVE *thou ſheweſt to the Lord if thou wilt* BREAK *with him for a trifle,* Sets the honour of his great name, Obedience to his holy Law, contentment to his good ſpirit at ſo low a rate, as that thou wilt dare to juſtle injuriouſly againſt al theſe for a very ſhadow, which in thine own account is as much as juſt nothing, where there is truth and ſtrength of Love the hardeſt things ſeem light and things of the greateſt worth little; *As Jacob ſerved ſeven years for Rachel, and it ſeemed ſhort and time little becauſe he loved her,* Gen. 29. 20. *Aſk me what thou wilt for dowry ſayd* Shecher, Hamors *ſon and I will give it, only give me the mayd* Gen. 34. 12.

Amongſt men in ordinary converſe which lyes within the compaſs of humanity he never prizeth a mans friendſhip or favor who fayles him in common curteſies, and deny their deſires, or refuſe to gratify them in things of

of no great worth. I thought I might have commanded a greater matter at your hands than ſo; but when I ſee you ſtick with me for ſuch a trifle, there is little love when ſo little a matter can hinder the work of it. A gracious heart wil part with all for Chriſt, and thou wilt part with Chriſt and his mercy rather than part with a little profit or pleaſure, nay, with a beggerly luſt that thy heart takes delight in: The Apoſtle cals it, *The labor of Love*, 1 Theſ. 1. 3. Love is laborious, laies out it ſelf to give content to that which is beloved. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you*, John, 15. Thou doſt nothing for the Lord, and thy love is very little, or elſe that which is, is nothing worth in Gods account: Look at the practice of *Judas* ſo helliſh and deteſtable as not to be named nor remembred amongſt men; and the loathſomneſs that lay in the bottom was this, That he ſold the Lord Jeſus *for thirty pieces of ſilver*; *a goodly price*, ſaies the Prophet, *Zach.* 11. 12. Turn but the Tables, judg thy practice by this pattern, thou ſets the Goſpel of Chriſt, and the Government of the Spirit of Chriſt at a far lower rate, even the thirtieth part of the price that he ſet, yea, ſel him to ſatisfie a baſe luſt or humor of thine own heart. It was a juſt reproach whereby *Abſalon* checked the falſneſs of *Huſhai*, who forſook *David* as he conceived in his diſtreſs, and followed his Enemy into the Camp: *Is this thy love to thy friend?* to leave him thus in the lurch, and do nothing for him in the day of diſtreſs. The reproof was ſharp and juſt, ſo far as reaſon could reach: but it fals far more juſtly, far more heavily upon thee; Is this thy love to the Name of the Lord Jeſus that thou ſhould'ſt ſlight it? to his Law, that thou ſhouldſt deſpiſe it, diſobey it? is this thy love to his Spirit, that thou ſhouldſt grieve it? and that for a triffle, for a twopence, for a booty, for a bargain, which wil make thee a beggar when thou haſt got al thou canſt gain by it; and that when there is no allurement worth the looking after

that might entice thee, no danger or difficulty that might hinder thee in thy duty and receiving a bleſſing and comfort therefrom.

2. *The leſs the thing is, the leſs care and conſcience thou expreſſeſt for the good of thine own ſoul.* When thou wilt run the hazard of everla ting happineſs for the gaining of a little profit, ſo many pence in the ſhilling, ſo many ſhillings in the pound; nay, but the giving ſatisfaction to a lazy, ſinful, ſenſual humor. Alas poor Creature, hadſt thou no more for thy ſoul but pence and ſhillings, a little lazineſs for thy life and happineſs, and Salvation, doſt thou value thy ſoul of no greater worth? Our Savior in the Goſpel ſets a higher price upon it, *Matth.* 16. 25. 26. *What will it profit a man, if he ſhould win the whol world, and loſe his own ſoul, or what ſhall he give in exchange for his ſoul?* q. d. A man ſhould be a loſer by the gain, and a begger by the bargain if he had all. And yet deluded Creature thou wilt ſel thy comfort, the peace of thy conſcience, the ſalvation of thy ſoul for a thing of naught. The whol world is vanity, nothing, and leſs than nothing, and thou wilt part with thy happineſs for that which is far leſs than that which is leſs than nothing. When *Naaman* came to the Prophet to be cured of the Leproſie of his body, and ſo to ſave his Natural life, and he was directed and enjoyned by the Prophet to waſh ſeven times in Jordan; he began to take it in diſtaſt as a courſe that was too mean and baſe for his comfort and Cure, *Are not* (ſaies he) *the Waters of* Pharpar *and* Damaſcus *better than the Waters of* Jordan? His Servants ſeaſonably and wiſely check the careleſsneſs of his own ſafety and recovery; *Had the Prophet commanded thee ſome great thing, would'ſt thou not have done it? How much more when he ſaith, waſh and be clean?* 2 Kings, 5. 12, 13. The greateſt labor ſhould have been undertaken to preſerve thy life, what careleſsneſs is this to neglect the leaſt that may procure thy ſafety? It's ſo here,

here, our ſick, ſinful, leprous and polluted ſouls, lies now at hazard ready to periſh; had the Lord enjoyned us to the heavieſt task, things of greateſt danger and difficulty to be done and ſuffered for the ſafeguard of our ſouls, would we not, ſhould we not have done them? parted with a limb for our lives, our lives for our ſouls? and ſhal we not be willing to part with the paring of our nails, theſe poor, empty, lying vanities, for our everlaſting happineſs? what Athieſtical careleſsneſs is this? that men ſhould live as if they had no ſouls to be ſaved, nor ſins to be pardoned, not care to do the leaſt thing that might procure their everlaſting good, and greateſt welfare.

3. *The leſs the things be in which thou giveſt thy ſelf liberty to tranſgreſs without any touch or trouble, the greater the wickedneſs of thy heart.* For ſuch a kind of courſe *argues undeniably that thy ſoul is fully poſſeſſed with the ſourſe of corruption, when it runs out at every chink, runs over upon every occaſion, and is carried to the commiſſion of evil.* And a man is put beyond al color of reaſon that may excuſe, or any pretence that might leſſen it before God or men: It argues the Veins are full of blood when the body bleeds in ſeveral parts without provocation; It's certain the channel is full, and the ſtream ſtrong, when it fils each creek, and goes ſpeedily and ſwiftly when there is no gale ſtirring. So it's certain, it argues ſtrength of diſtemper, and ſourſe of ſinful corruption in the ſoul, when the heart is carried to the commiſſion of evil upon each trifling occaſion that is preſented. The leſs the thing is that might draw thee, the greater the corruption of thy heart, that like a mighty ſtream tranſports thee to the practice; ſo that there is no reaſon to be rendred, but only the wretchedneſs of thy own Spirit, why thou falleſt into ſuch an evil. When the Lord charged the Iſraelites with the conſideration of his kindneſſes, and their departings from him, *Judg.* 2. 2. he thus preſſeth them, *Why have ye*

done this? So when this queſtion ſhal be put to thee, Why art thou lazy in thy place? careleſs of a command, ſo eaſie to be done, ſo dayly before thine eye that thou canſt not but attend it? Why doſt thou outreach in thy dealings, cheat in thy ſellings? Why there is nothing to be alleadged but the poyſonous impoſtumes of corruption that break out of thy heart, when there is no temptation without to provoke a man, no bait to entice him, no fear of evil on the one ſide to force him to ſin, to avoid danger; there is no weight of worth in any profit or pleaſure by thine own conteſſion, that might juſtly ſtir thee, or take thee aſide to go againſt Juſtice, Command, Conſcience, thy own Comforts and all: There is nothing but the power of thine own luſts, the perverſneſs of thine own will, the ſtrength and diſtemper of thine own affections, that leads and hurries thee to the Commiſſion of ſuch ſins. It was the evidence of the leudneſs of Iſraels whoredom that did proſtitute her ſelf to al Lovers without gift, *Ezek.* 16. 30. *How weak is thine heart?* The ſtrength of her ſinful inclinations was ſuch, that ſhe did not ſtay til temptation came and ſurprized her, but ſhe ſought temptations before they came, and did proſtitute her ſelf to every occaſion with eagerneſs. This alſo was the guiſe of them *who tranſgreſſed for a morſel of bread.* As it is in the ballance, when a dram or a grain wil fetch up the ſcales, it argues it fully loaded with the weight that carries it ſtrongly that way. When thine own mouth confeſſeth the things are of no conſequence, nor worthy conſideration, no ſweet of pleaſures that might delight, there is no price of any commodity that might carry any weight with thy wil and affections to caſt them that way. It's an argument undeniable, and beyond gainſaying, thy heart is loaded with luſts and corruptions, that ſo eaſily caſt the ballance that way, even the leaſt dram, the leaſt inkling of any occaſion that comes in that ſcale. The leſs the occaſion, the more and

ſtronger

ſtronger thy corruption, and ſuch as cannot be excuſed, therfore it's uſually moſt ſeverely plagued by the Lord, becauſe there is more ſinfulneſs in an action where there is leſs provocation, and more heart and affection to it. As it was in the Offerings of thoſe that caſt into the Corban; *the Widdow that caſt in two mites*, the Text ſaies by our Saviors Verdict, *ſhe caſt in more than they all*, Luk. 21. 3. becauſe there was more heart there, more unfained bounty and liberality, though the money and gift was leſs: So it is here; There are moſt noyſom corruptions in thy heart, vented upon the leaſt occaſion; the thing thou coveteſt it may be is but two mites, a penny or twopence in the ſhilling more than is juſt, when mens neceſſities force them to ſeek ſupply. But there's a ſink of immoderate covetouſneſs in thy heart, that againſt command and conſcience, knowledg and comfort, thou wilt tranſgreſs for a trifle. The leſs the thing is, the eaſier the command of a Governor; the more helliſh thy careleſsneſs and perverſneſs that wil not attend it, when it is before thy face, and may be performed without any trouble at all. And this is the cauſe why the Lord moſt commonly doth moſt ſeverely puniſh ſuch a practice, becauſe there was more heart, and ſo more poyſon in the ſin, when there was leſs occaſion to commit it. So it was in *Lots* wife, *Gen.* 19. 26. *She looked back from behind him, and ſhe became a Pillar of Salt.* It was but a caſt of her countenance, a look of her eye, one would have thought it had been but a little matter; the thing was little and eaſie, and therefore more eaſily it might have been diſcharged, therefore the covetous deſire was exceeding ſtrong, and the provocation exceeding great, and the puniſhment ſharp and remarkable when the Command is plain and expreſs, the Duty ſo open before us that it cannot but be diſcerned, eaſie and familiar to be diſcharged. It's a mighty current of corruption and deſperate impudencie, to ſin in the face of a command, and under the eye

eye and check of Conſcience, therefore our ſaviour leaves a ſtarre as it were, a memorandum upon that part of the ſtorie *Remember Lotts Wife*, beware how you go againſt an expreſs charge in ſervices which may eaſily be accompliſhed, *Luke.* 7. 32. The like you may ſee *Numb.* 15. 31. 32. *in the man that gathered ſticks upon the Sabboth*, look we at the thing it ſelf, what can any man imagine of leſs moment, and ſmaller conſequence, to gather a few ſticks, he was alone, he entiſed no man to the like evil, and it ſhould ſeem not in ſo open a place, for they found him, but if you look into the foregoing verſe its a ſpecial inſtance of one that ſhould ſin preſumptuouſly, there is moſt of the venom and poyſon of a mans heart in ſuch a practice.

Wee have now done with the firſt ſort of thoſe pretences wherby our carnal reaſon would beat back the evidence of the truth, and caſt in ſome fogs and miſts ſome forged cavills, which might cloud and eclipſe the the ful diſcovery of the authority of the truth, that ſo the filth of ſin might never be diſcerned, nor the heart conſequently affected therewith as it ſhould and here Satan uſeth al the ſubtilty and policy that lyes within the compaſs of his power. For he knows ful wel if he daſh the work of the truth in the very entrance and beginning of it, he wil then keep it from ever coming to perfection. *If the ſtrong man can keep his dore ſhut, he muſt needs keep all his ſubſtance and his houſe ſafe alſo*, and herein anſwerable lyes the primitive and chief work of *the Holy Ghoſt* he is ſent of purpoſe *to convince the world of ſin*, to ſilence al fleſh and to captivate every thought; and therefore we have labored to chaſe away thoſe miſts, to diſpel thoſe clouds and fogges, which darkned the ſhining of the truth of the Goſpel; when the ſinner cannot but ſee the evil and danger of ſin, which is now ſo evident it cannot be denied.

the ſecond ſort of Cavils

The ſecond ſort of cavils is here. *He cannot but confeſs the danger, yet he vainly hopes he can prevent it and*

and that further quiets him and encourageth him in his sinful course, the hope of escape; The pretences of carnal reason in this kind are four: *Either God will not regard it*; or if he do, *Yet he will not require it, and call to an account*; or if that, *He can satisfy for it*; or if none of these, *The Lord wil not be rigorous but he wil abate it.*

Al these pleas issue from the Atheism, of the heart of the sons of men, wherby they neither know God nor themselves; we shal persue them in their places and order, but briefly.

Such is the deluded folly of mens minds, that they confine the Almighty to their compass, *and therefore Sottishly conceive that the Lord is so attent to the great affayres of heaven and the place of his holineß, and the Glory of his own name, that he looks not after the things here below* nor regards the carriages of the sons of men, that creep up and down like so many poor Ants upon the face of the Earth. So that either *the Lord hath covered himself in thick clouds*, and retired himself to the Throne of his Glory that he cannot see or else he attends matters of greater moment and Consequence to order in his infinit wisdom, and therefore layes these aside without any regard. And if once this forgery finds entertainment it sets open a gap to any kind of prophaneness, makes men careless and fearless what they do because God regards not what is don, 2 *Pet.* 3. 1. 2. *So those scorners which walk after their own lusts, saying where is the promise of his coming, for since the Fathers fell a sleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*, Do yee not see how men provoke God and prosper? and hath it not been so in all ages, the wicked & ungodly continue in sinful courses & yet succeed according to their own content. It was so in the former ages, it went best with the worst men, it is so in this, and wil be so to the end. the Lord lookes not after the mean occasions of men upon earth finds 1.

finds himself employment in the affayres of Heaven; it matters not what the desert of our sins be, we shal never feel what they do deserve; so those rulers, *Amos 7. they put away the evil day far from them, and then they cause the seat of violence to come near*, Psal. 73. 10. 11. those blasphemers *who set their mouths against Heaven and their tongue walks through the midst of the Earth, & they say how doth God know this? and is there knowledg in the most high?* Upon this ground it is that they let loose themselves in the fearless pursuit of their loathsom abominations, then said he unto me (*the Angel of the Lord of Hosts*) *the iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, the land is ful of blood, and the city ful of perverseness; For they say the Lord hath forsaken the earth the Lord seeth not* Ezek. 9. 9. For since here we must learn to chase out and keep out such imaginations, by setting up the light of the truth in our minds and listening wholly thereunto. So the psalmist shewes the cause, and applyes the cure, *Psal.* 94. 8. *Understand ye brutish among the people and ye fools when wil ye be wise. He that plantd the ear shal not he hear; he that formed the eye shal not he see?* Yea the Lord professeth to take notice of these mens wayes in an especial manner, & to make privie search after them, *Zeph.* 1. 12. *he wil search* Jerusalem *with candles and visit such as sit upon their lees and say who sees us*, you shal find he knows both good and evil and he wil work both as a reward to such as deserve. This *Job* felt by experience *Job*, 14. 16. *For now thou numbrest my steps, dost thou not watch our my sins, my transgression is sealed up in a bag.* and thou shalt find it so, the Lord wil follow thee step by step, and track and trace thee in all thy wandrings and keeps an account of al thy sins sealed up as it were in bags.

But if the Lord doth see and observe al our evils yet he is patient and wil pass them by, and put up those

many

many provocations, being pitiful and compassionate to poor creatures, knowing they be but dust.

Answ. True it is the Lord out of his long sufferance, wil bear long with the base dealings of the sons of men, yet out of the purity and holiness of his nature he cannot but bring them to account and trial for al the swervings of their lives, *Psal*, 50·18. Thus the secure sinner counted the Lords patience a kind of connivence, and allowance of him in ungodly wayes *I held my tongue and thou thoughtest wickedly that I was such a one as thy self, that God could wink* at wickedness, look aside at the slips and swervings of the ungodly, and suffer them to go away with it; but al in vain, *For I wil reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee, consider this yee that forget God*: so likewise in Eccles. 11. 9. *rejoyce O yong man in thy youth and let thy heart chear thee in the wayes of thy youth, & walk in the sight of thine eyes but know thou that for all these things thou shalt come to judgment*, the Lord wil arrest thee for the wrong done to his holiness, and follow the suit against thy soul for al thy injurious dealings, and he himself wil come in against thee as a swift witness; *If thy Conscience condemn thee God himself is greater than thy Conscience and he knowes al things, and wil bring to light the hidden things of darkness & will make manifest the counsels of the heart.* When al those dunghil stains of Adulterous lusts, and malicious, envious and covetous desires, shal be layd open to the view of the sun, al those swarmes of foolish and wicked imaginations, shal be then discovered, its better therefore that thou shouldst see them now, in the day of Grace: better thou shouldst have them now discovered to thy Conscience for thy humiliation, then at the day of judgment for thy confusion.

3. *But if the Lord will require all, then I hope I may use means to satisfy for al*, when my day beginns to decline, and my Sun to set, and my glass is run, when

I am dropping down to the grave, and groaning upon my sick bed. I wil then betake my self to my prayers & tears and repentance for my sins, I wil sorrow for my sins, seek unto God for mercy, I wil repent and reform the evil of my wayes, and the Lord wil remove the Plague of them.

Answ. In thy declining daies wilt thou do this? Oh deluded creature, who knows but this day or before thou hast read over this book the Lord may take away thy soul, who knows whether thou shalt have time to seek, or a heart to seek, or God wil accept of thee when thou seekest.

1. *Whether a time or no.* Whether the date of Gods bounty, the day of Grace and period of Gods patience, be come to an end. When thou hast abused so many opportunities, whether ever he wil give thee leave or time once to look out for mercy, when thy tongue shal be faultring in thy mouth & thy eyes fallen in thy head, thy heart sink and dy within thy bosom, not able to sigh out one desire, and the Lord snatch thee out of the land of the living before thou canst see or consider whither thou art going *Luke.* 19. 41. 42. *If thou hadst known at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace but now they are hidden from thine eyes,* the things of their peace were before their eyes, and yet were hid from their eyes *Rev.* 2. 21. 23. *I gave her day to repent, but shee repented not, therefore I wil cast her in to a bed and kill her children with death.* shee had no more dayes of repentance but of ruine, shee was cast into a bed of sorrow and had not time to pour out her prayers.

2. If thou hast time, *who knows that God will give thee a heart, to seek for mercy or sue for Grace;* It's true God may help thee, but it's as true God may harden thee, he may humble thee and he may desert thee, and it's most likely he wil, thou which hast refused to hear, he wil refuse to help, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *I would have purged thee and thou wouldest not be purged thou shalt never*

be

be purged more, Jer. 51. 9. *we would have cured* Babilon *but she would not be cured, leave her then,* leave them to the blindness of their mind that would not be enlightened, leave them to the hardness of their hearts that would not be converted; ***He will not alwaies strive*** who hath stood so long and knocked so often, thou shalt see him no more quickening, awing, affecting of thee.

Or if thou hast a heart to seek in thy manner, *who knows whether God will accept it or no?* Thou wouldest not regard his entreaties and perswasions, and he wil not respect thy prayers and cryes, *Prov.* 1. 28. *Then shall they call but I will not answer they shall seek me early but they shall not find me;* Hebr. 12. 17. Esau *found no place of repentance though he sought it carefully with tears;* nay he may send thee as he did the *Israelits* to the Idols of thy heart, *Jer.* 2. 28. *But where are thy gods that thou hast made? let them arise and save thee.* 3.

But Lastly *if I cannot satisfy for my evills, yet out of his bounty and mercy he may abate me of the Plagues* the mercies of God are great, and his compassions large, and thus the mercies of God who were provided to bring men from their corruptions to repentance, through the abuse of carnal hearts become means to make them secure in their dregs, *Deuter.* 29. 19. when al the plagues were threatned, yet they bless themselves and say, I shal have peace though I walk in the imaginations of my evil heart. So they in Isaiah. made a Covenant with death and Hell. 4.

The sin against mercy is one of the greatest sins that ever thou committest. Thou turnest the grace of God into wantonness, *Jude* 4. and such are ordained of ould unto condemnation; thou despisest mercy and abusest it, thou shalt therefore be condemned by mercy not saved by it. God must not be just and so not God, if he save thee without satisfaction to his justice, The Lord cannot wrong himself to relieve thee, dishonor himself *Answ.*

to deliver thee, *Exod.* 34. 7. *He will by no means clear the guilty*, Its one of his names and himself, *and he cannot deny himself*, and if his justice be not satisfyed thy plagues cannot be abated.

The third sort of Cavil.

If a carnal man sees he cannot prevent the danger of sin, then he sayes I will bear it, if I be damned I will suffer it as I may if it come to the hardest. Let me have my sins though the Devil have my soul, let me have the sweet of the pleasures of sin in this world though I never see the face of God in Glory, this is a most forlorn and divellish resolution.

Answ.

But dost thou know what thou sayest? true thou shalt bear thy damnation, but thou art never able to bear it without breaking under it, being helpless and hopeless forever. O woe to thee that ever thou wert born! O poor creature! If I should cease speaking and al of us joyn together in weeping and lamenting thy condition it were the best course; It is impossible thou shouldest ever bear Gods wrath. Let these three things be considered.

1.

Judg the Lion by the Paw, judg the torments of Hel by some little beginnings of it, and the dregs of Gods vengeance by some little sips of it, and judg how unable thou art to bear the whol, by thy inability to bear a little of it in this life, In terror of Conscience as the wise man saies, *A wounded spirit who can bear?* When God layes the flashes of hell fire upon thy soul thou canst not endure it. Whatsoever a man can inflict upon a poor wretch may be born, but when the Almighty comes in battel array against a poor soul how can he undergo it? Witness the Saints that felt it, as also the wicked themselves who have had some beginnings of hell in their Consciences; when the Lord hath let in horror into the soul of a poor sinner, how is he transported with an insupportable burthen, *When it is day he wisheth it were night, and when it is night, he wisheth it were day*, all the freinds in the world cannot comfort him, nay many have

have fought to hang themselves, to do any thing rather than to suffer a little of the vengeance of the Almighty, and one man is roaring and yelling, as if he were now in Hell already, and admits of no comfort; if the drops be so heavy, what wil the whol Sea of Gods Vengeance be? If he cannot bear the one, how can he bear the other?

2. *Consider thine own strength, and compare it with all the strength of the Creatures*; and so if all the Creatures be not able to bear the wrath of *the Almighty*, as *Job* saies, *Job*, 6. 12. *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh as braß, that must bear thy wrath?* as if he had said, it must be a stone or brass that must bear thy wrath. Though thou wert as strong as brass or stones, thou could'st not bear it: when the mountains tremble at the wrath of the Lord, shal a poor worm or bubble and shadow endure it?

Conceive thus much, If al the Diseases in the world did seize upon one man, and if all the torments that all the Tyrants in the world could devise, were cast upon him; and if all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth did conspire the destruction of this man, and if all the Devils in Hell did labor to inflict punishment upon him, you would think this man to be in a miserable case, and yet al this is but a beam of Gods Indignation. If the beams of his wrath be so hot, what is the full Sun of his Wrath, when it shal seize upon the soul of a sinful creature in ful measure?

3. Nay, If yet thou thinkest to lift up thy self above all Creatures, and to bear more than they all, *Then set before thine eyes the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, he that creates the Heavens, and upholds the whol frame thereof*; when the wrath of God came upon him only as a *Surety*, he cries out with his Eyes ful of tears, and his heart ful of sorrow, and the Heavens ful of lamentation, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matth. 27. 46. Oh thou poor creature, if thou hast the

the heart of a man, gird up the loyns of thy mind, and see what thou canst do: Dost thou think to bear that which the Lord Jesus could not bear without so much sorrow? yet he did endure it without any sin or weakness. He had three sips of the Cup, and every one of them did sink his soul; and art thou, a poor sinful wretch, able to bear the wrath of God for ever?

Means 4. *Yield unto the Evidence of the Truth thus cleered, beyond all opposition and gainsaying*, and sit down in silence under the Authority of it, and let it settle upon thy soul; neither question it any more, nor hear any thing against it, when it hath been heard formerly so fully scanned and determined upon such undeniable grounds. Shut the door against the appearance of any sinful shifts, admit no conference with carnal reason any further; Say, that coast is cleer, that case is concluded; my corrupt heart hath had a ful hearing.

All the Cavils and devices that ever the policy of Hel could coyn, or the falsness and deceitfulness of my own heart could forge or frame, have been alleadged, followed, and pressed to the utmost, they have been answered and confuted, and the definitive sentence is past against mine own soul, by the ful consent of my own apprehension; I yield the day, I confess the case, I hold up my hand and plead guilty: These are my sins, they are so hainous, so dangerous, I could never have conceived, I could never beleeve it before, but now I yield and confess it freely; these are the abominations that I have committed, it's Hel that I have deserved; I am an undone man, a poor forlorn damned creature; this is my misery, I cannot prevent it, nor can I bear it, I do not now question it: Awake with this in the morning, sit down with this at the Table, walk with this al the day long, and let this Truth rest with thee, when thou betakest thy self to rest, and it wil over-power and affect thy heart: So *Job* when his heart came off kindly in a

godly

godly remorse for his transgressions, he suffers the loathsomness of his condition to lodg and stay with him, he lies under it, and looks at nothing else, *Job*, 7. 20. *What shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men, I have sinned*; q. d. I have no Arguments to alleadge, no excuses to make, I can say nothing, nor do nothing in mine own defence; only I must say I have sinned, thou art the preserver of men, and unless thou succor me, I must perish, I cannot preserve my self: If the Corrosive be never so keen, the Salve never so searching and operative, yea, though it were applied to the rawness of the Sore, the very proper place for it's work, if ye stirr it continually, now take it off, then lay it on; it wil never work effectually, nor throughly, or kindly heal the wound; but you must bind it on, let it stay upon the place by the space of so many hours, then you shal find the proper and powerful operation thereof. So it is with the Soveraign and convicting Truths of Christ, when all Cavils have been answered, and all the pleas which a mans self-deceiving heart hath put in, have been removed; so that the Truth finds passage to the Conscience, and is applied aright unto the soul; unless it settle there by a silent subjection unto the strength of it, and admit no further questioning nor debating when the cause is determined by undeniable evidence, it never works kindly, nor prevails so effectually as otherwise it would. It's Satans policy and practice he dayly attends; When Scriptures are so pregnant, and Arguments come in with such strength that no carnal pretences can stand before them, though he retires for the present, and seems to leave the cause; yet upon the next occasion, when any advantage is presented, he brings about the busines again, and follows the temptation afresh, and puts in some pretence, while he questions the Truth he hinders the operation of it for the while, while we are parlying and disputing what we should do, we omit so long to do what we ought, and unfit our selves to do

what

what we intend and are reſolved of formerly. Therefore when al cavils have been ſilenced, let not theſe brablers appear again, nor ſuffer them to renew their ſuits and ſhifts any more, but caſt them out of conſideration (as we do uſe to caſt bils and barreters out of the Court when the cauſes have been heard) ſettle the heart under the ſentence of the Truth, and let it ſit down there; Hear nothing againſt the determination of the Word, but out of the Word; and then it's certain that determination wil never alter before thy condition alter. Give thy ſoul for gone really according to the righteous Judgment of the Truth, and ſtop al paſſages that no carnal reaſon may come to the ſpeech of thy ſoul, or pretend any way of reſcue, and you wil preſently perceive, it wil break kindly under the blow, or elſe look out for relief elſwhere. Go aſide then and parley with thy Spirit, and ſay, The Word upon ſerious ſearch and examination hath determined it, my Conſcience confeſſeth it, and I now ſee the loathſomneſs of my ſin, and wretchedneſs of my ſelf and condition, I go up and down the world as a condemned creature whoſe doom is paſt, and look dayly for the day and hour of execution, that death conſume my daies, my body drop down to the duſt, and my ſinful, proud, polluted ſoul be dragged down into Hel amongſt the Devils; to avoid it, is impoſſible; to bear it, is intollerable; wo to my ſoul that thus I have ſinned, and who ſhal, who can deliver from this ſin, and this death? Talk not, trouble not me with diſpute what my ſin and my condition is, but Oh, help me out of it, if it may be. And it's certain, if thy ſoul abide here, it wil ſink under unſupportable ſorrow, and ſoak it ſelf in it, for this wil take away the ſight and ſweetneſs of any thing that may refreſh and ſupport the wounded ſoul, becauſe he wil ſee his ſins in the bitterneſs and venom of them, where ever he is, and what ever he doth, and as that which poyſons al the beſt of the comforts of this life. He ſees his ſin in his proſperity, which is but the

the facting of him for the slaughter. He sees his sin in his honor, he is advanced the higher that his downfall may be the more miserable. God fils his belly with his hid Treasures of this world, that he may treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. As it is with Metal, if it pass through the fire only, it hardly warms it; but if it lie under the blowing of the fire, it will melt it. When we take away carnal shifts, and bring the soul to the sight of sin, we put it into the fire, but that only warms it a little; but when it lies down under the Sentence, it's then under the Furnace, and that will melt it. Thus *our iniquities are said to lay hold of a man*, Psal. 40. 12. When we are under the Sentence which the Word passeth upon our sin, we are then under the reach of our sins, and they then *lay hold of us*, and that will cause that we shal *not be able to look up*.

All those Truths that we shal hear publickly dispensed out of the word, or we shal privately read in it, which concerns our corruption of which we stand guilty, or that condition into which we are brought by reason of our sin; *We must take them home to our selves, as the special portion the Lord hath appointed unto us in particular, and we must make particular application of them in a peculiar manner unto our selves*; for by this means there is more light without, whereby our sins and estates are more fully discovered, more Eye-salve and Spiritual sight conveyed to our minds, whereby the eye of our understanding is more clearly enlightened to see our sins, and our misery in them. He that joyns many fires together, they will not only warm him, but scorch him if he stand neer them. So it is with the Word which is a fire, the joyne Testimony of so many Scriptures, or so many whol om Admonitions taken and applied neer, as those which attend our Particular, they will not only warm and affect the heart a little slightly, but scorch a mans Conscience with the terror, as wel as

Means 3.

cleer a mans apprehension with the light; that is one thing in the 1 *Cor.* 14. 24. The simple Ideot when he comes before God in the Assembly, and the Word is published and seconded; the Text saies, *he is judged of all, and condemned of all, and so the thoughts of his heart are made manifest, and he falls down,* and saies, these sins are mine, I have committed them; all these plagues, and threatnings, and judgments are mine, I have deserved the Lord should lay them upon me; all this guilt belongs to me, how shal I answer it, or be able to undergo it? All these thus taken home by Spiritual application, become as so many weights added to the burden, which makes it unsupportable. Look as it is in Chyrurgery, it's not enough to have the Salve, and apply it, yea, and bind it also; but it must be afresh renewed, and so quickened, and then it wil work afresh, and marvelous forcibly. So it is when by our own conviction, and the dispensation of the Ministry, the light of our apprehension is made more cleer by the instruction of the Word, the strength of our own conviction established by the conviction of the Word, we apply afresh, follow them, and fasten them afresh upon our souls, and that makes them prevail more effectually than before, like a fresh gale, it makes us go faster on the way we intended.

Means. 6. *Make and keep the evil of sin really present in thine apprehension*; and that's the last way to see the vileness of it, and find the venom of it in its greatest efficacy. It was the Observation of the Natural Phylosophers, and Experience and Reason gives in approbation of the course; the neerer we bring an Object of evil to our view, the more it affects and stirs the heart of him that beholds, when they would terrifie a Malefactor, and wrest out a confession of Truth, they present the gibbets and instruments of Death that be prepared, see him upon the Rack, make him ascend the Ladder, that the neerness of the evil now approaching may strike terror,

and

and fasten fear and dread upon his Soul; deal thou so with thine own heart for thy spiritual good. See the evil of sin in the execution of it upon others, and set them before thine eyes, and act it also upon thy self by a through consideration of thine own course.

1. *Set the evil of sin before thine Eyes in the execution of it upon others.* This was the advice the Lord gives to the rebellious and unbeleeving Jews when he would have them sensible of the danger of their own transgressions, he sends them to see the ruine that sin hath made, the havock it hath wrought in the places of greatest renown, persons of greatest respect for their profession and account before God and men, *Jer.* 7. 12. *Go now unto my place, which was in* Shiloh, *where I set my Name at the first, and see what I have done to it, for the wickedness of my people Israel.* Though that was the place of my Worship, wherein my Name and Honor was great, and therefore might in reason be preserved; they the people of my choyce and peculiar ones, and therefore might expect pity and commiseration, yet were destroyed and laid waste without remedy, and recovery. *So will I do to this house which is called by my Name, in which you trust, and unto the place which I gave unto you and your Fathers, as I have done unto* Shiloh. So also when he would make them see the loathsomness of their unnatural departing away from him to other gods, he sends them to other Nations, that they may convince and condemn them for their course, so contrary to reason, and the very carriage of the Heathen, *Jer.* 2. 10. *Pass over to the Isles of* Kittim, *and send unto* Kedar, *&c.* Not that they should make a Journey thither by their bodily presence, but send their thoughts afar off, and in serious consideration present those evils really to their own view, see what sin hath done to others, and be perswaded it will bring the like evil upon their own souls. Let me so speak to thee, and do thou so practice. Go thou hard-hearted sinner to the red Sea, and hear there

Pharaoh belching out his blasphemy against the Lord, *Who is Jehovah? I know not Jehovah, nor will I let Israel go*: See there the Wheels of his Chariots taken off, and he and his Egyptians cry ing and flying, *Let us fly from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them.* See them drowning and dying, and their dead Carkasses cast upon the shore. This is the hideous and direful destruction that hardness of heart hath wrought. Go thou rebellious sinner into the Wilderness into the Tents of *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*. See them rising up against the Lord and his Officers, and reproaching their persons and proceedings, *Ye take too much upon you ye sons of* Levi, *seeing all the Congregation are holy*, *Numb.* 16. 4. Stay but a while, and see them *standing in their Tent doors, they and theirs, and see presently the Earth opening and swallowing up them, and all that appertained unto them*; they went down alive to the pit, roaring to Hel: And hear al Israel flying at the cry of them, *lest the Earth swallow us up also.* See the others that offered Incense burning in the fire; and see what rebellion against God his Officers and Ordinances works. Go thou proud hearted wretch to *Babylon*, see *Nebuchadnezzar* walking and vaunting himself upon the top of the Turret; anon wildering amongst the Beasts of the field; and from thence pass on to the Pallace of *Herod*: See him set upon his Throne venting his venom against the dear Servants of the Lord, and the people crying, *The voyce of God, and not of man*, Acts, 12. 22. he taking the Honor to himself in his heart, and not giving it to God: Follow him thence into his Chamber, and see him breathing out his heart upon the bed of sorrow, the Lice eating out his Bowels. Go thou covetous Earthly-minded Creature to Jerusalem unto *Judas*; hear him there plotting and bargaining with the Scribes and Pharisees, selling the Lord Jesus, the Lord of Life for thirty pieces of Silver; see him counting and pocketting his Money, and so betraying his Master:

Master: follow him thence into the High-Priests Hall, see his pale face, his ghastly looks, and shaking hands; hear him yelling out of the horror of his heart, *I have sinned*, Matth. 27. 3, 4. See him flinging his money away; and follow him thence, and behold him putting the halter about his neck, sighing out, the blood of Jesus, the innocent blood, the blood of Jesus; let me not be, rather than be thus miserable. and with that he flings himself head-long, and his bowels gush out, and his soul departs out of his body, and the Devils they lay hold upon it: Send thy thoughts post to Hell after him; hear him there cursing the day that ever he was born, the head that plotted it, the heart that desired it, the Scribes and Pharisees that consented, and gave it, and the tongue that said, Hail Master. Behold what desperate evils covetousness wil drive a man unto, and what unfferable desolation it draws with it.

As thou seest the execution of the evil upon others 2.
So act upon thy self by present consideration; danger and death when they are at hand and in present expectation they put men upon real expressions, when they see they must dy, and they must come to answer, sins wil appear as they are, and they must suffer what they do deserve, there is no shift then, their hearts and hopes shake and sink; act therefore thine own death and thine own judgment, and bring in a real account of thy Condition by daily and real consideration, dye daily, and drag thy heart to the tryal of Gods tribunal, see what thou canst make of it now, that thou mayest know what to expect then; Go apart, and keep Assises or at least Sessions with thy self I see my sins and my condition, let me see how I can give an account for them and how I can answer to the Lord and his Law, or how I can bear that which follows; First or last I must come to trial, let me train up my self before-hand to it. Suppose then, I heard the last trumpe blow, *Arise ye dead and come to judgment*, suppose I saw Christ coming in the

the clouds with thousands, suppose I beheld the thrones set and the Lord Jesus summoning al flesh; when the bookes shal be opened, and al hidden things brought to light, when the wicked shal not be able to lift up their heads but cal to the Mountains to cover them, they are not able to abide the tryal, and therefore cannot endure the terror of the lamb; thou canst not but say those are thy sins of which thou never yet repentedst, that thy curse and condemnation is such as thou art not able to avoid, thou canst not answer for the one, nor bear the other; Therefore bring it up to this conclusion let me not rest in this condition now that the word and my Conscience tells me I shal never find comfort therein at that day.

Let me now draw towards a conclusion by setting on the exhortation with two or three Motives.

Motive I.

And first consider the danger of the mistake herein, to misse here is to runcarry forever in the great work of our conversion, without any possibility of recovery or redress; If God never let a man see his evil its certain he never recovers him out of it. When he will prepare a people for destruction and cut out a people on purpose for confusion, and make them ripe for plagues he takes this course, *Isa.* 6. go thy wayes *and make the eyes of this people dim and their ears heavie that in seeing they may see and not perceive, hearing they may hear and not understand, least they should be converted and I should heal them*, keep them there and they be safe enough from ever receiving any saving good. So our Saviour *Math.*6.21.22. *The light of the Body is the eye if the light within thee be darkness how great is that darkness* the whol conversation is so; a wound here is never recovered there is no hope of any good coming to a soul shut up in blindness It's made a character, a brand that God sets upon such as be reprobates *Math.*13.13. *to you it's given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but to them in Parables that seeing they might see and not understand.*

derſtand If there be but one gate to come into the way miſs that& you miſs the way to here,therefore when men are but one ſtep betewen them and deſtruction they are thus diſcovered *Math.* 24.37.*they eat,they drank, they married and knew nothing untill the flood came and deſtroyed them al*, As in a town where there is but one entrance or paſſage, block up that, there is no coming in, no going out, and therefore no poſſibility of relief. They go not out to ſeek any, none come in to bring any thing, ſo here when the mind is blinded,there is no poſſibility of the coming in of any good or for thee to receive any,the paſſage of Grace and of mercy is wholy blocked up,therfore our Saviour is ſaid to come to bleſs every one of you by turning of you from your ſins, therefore you muſt ſee them before you turn from them, no ſeeing, no turning, no bleſſing. *Acts.* 3. 26.

It is the eaſieſt way of al other; It eaſeth a man of that laſt reckoning,and arrerages to come; a ſeaſonable and timely diſcovery of ſin makes a man foreſee occaſions of evil and prevent them, it ſets up a fear in the heart and ſtops a man that he dare not adventure to commit them. *He that walks in darkneſs knowes not whither he goes* and therefore muſt needs go to ruin, he lyes open to al evil that comes, he diſcerns it not, he wil do any evil be it never ſo loathſom, he perceives no ſuch evil, he takes ſour for ſweet, poyſon for cordials and preſervatiues,& ſwallowes down any thing though death be in it, *John* 16.2.*they ſhal think they do God good ſervice when they ſlay you*; and ſayes *Paul I was a perſecuter blaſphemous and injurious and through ignorance I did all this* 1. *Tim.* 1.13. The kingdom of Satan is the kingdom of darkneſs;while he keeps men in ignorance & hoodwinked he can carry them whither he wil; when the light of the Goſpel is once ſet up his kingdom falls to the ground, nor can he prevail as before: It was a good womans ſpeech earneſtly deſireing that her children might be inſtructed and catechiſed that

2.

there

their reckoning might be less and their account more easy than hers, having lived in ignorance, children under Parents, and Servants trayned up under good masters that shew them the evils of their wayes and keeps them & affrights from them, they come on so easily to Christ, & are carryed so gently that they know not what terror means, timely conviction keeps them from *the pollutions of the world.*

3. Lastly *it is the safest and surest way.* See our sins we must first or last either here to our humiliation or hereafter to our confusion; and we had better see them by the light of the Gospel while we are within sight of mercy that we may be relieved, than to see them by the flames of Hell when there is no remedy. *If the eye be light the whol body is ful of light* Math. 6. 22. *If we would judg our selves we shal not be judged of the Lord* 1. Cor 11. 31. Who would not now be convinced that he may then be acquitted see his sins now for his humiliation, that he may never have them then laid to his charge, *Jer.* 50. 20. *In those dayes and at that time saith the Lord the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shal be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shal not be found, for I wil pardon their iniquities and wil remember their sins no more.* How should this encourage thee to seek out for thy sins now, to search thy heart and to look into thy life, when as indeed if thou dost so see thy sins as to sorrow for them and by this sight and sorrow thou be driven to a saviour, thy sins may be sought for but they shal be found no more.

When they heard this.

The description of contrition stood of two parts wherby the nature of the work was especially discoverd.

Partly

Partly in the { *Causes of it,* { *Sight of sin,* / *Sorrow for sin.*
Effects of it, { *Detestation of sin.* / *Sequestration from sin.*

Concerning the sight of sin so far as it serves our turn in a true conviction of it, in that they stood here as accused by *Peter* and condemned in their own Consciences as guilty of no less than the blood of Jesus, we have already spoken.

The second thing in the text to be considered is the means how this was wrought. And these are two.

The first, *is a particular Application of their special corruption,* the Apostle doth not hover in the general and shoot at rovers, but comes close to them, chargeth them expresly in a special manner, and lets fly in the very faces of them, *this Jesus whom yee have crucified,* he names not, he blames not any other, he sayes not *Judas* was a wretch that betrayed him, the souldiers cruel that took him, *Pilate* base and fearful and unjust that condemned him, no this is the *Jesus and you are the men that have committed this villany,* A person could not be more innocent, a practice more bloody, you are men that stand guilty of this horrible abomination of *Crucifying the Lord of Glory.* The Doctrine from hence is this.

A plain and particular Application of special sins by the Ministry of the word is a special means to bring the soul to a sight of, and sorrow for them. Doct.

Plain Application and powerful conviction go to-

gether. *Let the house of Israel know that God hath made him Lord and Christ whom ye have crucifyed*; you are the men I mean, this is your sin I mention. Thus our saviour the great Prophet of His Church, who spake as never man spake and best knew how to deal with deceitful hearts, he layeth his finger upon the sore, and mark how he pincheth with particulars, as his ordinary manner of dispensation was to the Churches; *Rev.* 3. 2. *I know thy works, thou hast a name to be alive but thou art dead.* I say thou art hypocritical, and I know what I say, and I tell thee openly what I know, thou hast a form of profession but thou hast no heart nor life nor power of religion in thy course; He that could not erre in what he did teach, he teacheth what Ministers should do in their dispensation; And there was nothing more usual with our Saviour, then to point out particular sins and sinners; *Woe be to you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites.* Math. 23. and therefore he doth not closly and covertly as it were give a kind of intimation, afar off what he would, and leaves men to pick and search out his meaning; but tells them their own in English as we say: plucks them out by the pole goes not behind the dore to tel men their faults, but gives in testimony against their sin and that to their teeth; *Luke.* 16. 15. when the Pharisees in an impudent manner, began to mock at him, he lets fly poynt blanck, *You are they that justefy your selves but the Lord knows your hearts*; Yea it was the charge he gives to al his prophets, when they were to deal with the Jewes and to dispense his counsels unto them, *Hos.* 2. 1. 2. *Plead with your Mother plead, tell her she is not my Wife.* [Plead] is a Law term, cal her by name, summon her into the court of Conscience, follow the suit against her Lay the charge and plead the Acton against her particular sins. Thus *Stephen Acts.* 7. 51. *Yee stiff-necked and hard hearted, yee have alwayes resisted the holy Ghost, as your Fathers did so do yee.* So

the

the Apoſtle frequently *Acts*, 4. 10. 11. *be it known to you and to all the people of Iſrael, that in the name of Jeſus &c. whom ye have crucifyed, This is the ſtone refuſed by you builders*, you are the men, and this is your evil.

The Reaſons ſhall be touched in a word.

The place and duty of a Miniſter requires this, who hath a ſpecial charge, and therefore ſhould have a particular care to foreſee, and ſo to prevent the particular and ſpecial evils, which he perceives to bleniſh the Chriſtian courſe, and endanger the ſpiritual comforts of the people under his guidance and of whoſe ſafety he muſt give an account; and this wil not be done unleſs a man ſingle out the perſons and ſet home their ſins in ſpecial. The ſteward is not only to know the ſeveral conditions of the perſons in the family but to provide a portion ſuitable for each, if ever the ſafety of the whol be provided for; and the cordials for the weak, milk for the little ones, and ſtronger meat for thoſe who are of able ſtrength; the Skil of the Phyſitian & the onely way to cure a ſettled and inward diſtemper as the dropſy or falling ſickneſs, is not to give the patient an ordinary purge, a common receit; that every Quack-ſalver wil do and do no good at al; But he muſt have that wiſdom to hit the humor, and to provide ingredients that wil ſuit the temper of the party and the particular nature of the diſeaſe; So it is the part of a skilful Miniſter to hit the humor of the heart of a ſinner, to make a receipt on purpoſe to meet with the particular diſtemper ſuch as wil worke upon, or ſluggiſhneſs pride hypocriſie, perverſneſs and as the medicine doth upon the ſpleen or choller, and ſo the Lord to the Prophet *Ezek.* 16. 2. *Cauſe the houſe of Iſrael to know their abominations*; The Sedulous ſhepheard who indeed would provide for the wellfare of his ſheep, its not enough that by common ſurvey he caſts his eye upon them, but he muſt pen them, and handle them, ſearch them and dreſs them

Reaſon, 1.

them, according to their ſeveral ayls, and ſuch Maladies unto which they are ſubject. So a faithful Miniſter muſt deal with poor ſinners, as with the Sheep commended to his care and cuſtody; he muſt find them in their particular evils, and follow them with application of ſpecial helps.

Reaſ. 2. *The neceſſity of ſinners requires this*: For this manner of the delivery of the Truth, it awakens and ſtirs up the mind and heart of the Hearer to a more ſerious attention to that which is ſpoken, and ſettles the heart upon a more through conſideration of himſelf and his waies; unto both which the ſoul of a ſinner rocked as it were aſleep in the ſecurity of a ſinful courſe, is loth to come; not willing to hear any thing that would trouble him in his ſins, and very ready to lay aſide the conſideration of that he hears in that behalf. Whereas particular application provokes to the practice of both, cals a man by name as it were, that he muſt come to his Anſwer; he cannot avoid it, it wil not ſuffer him to make an eſcape before he give in his Anſwer: This flings in the light ſo ful into mens faces that it forceth them to look about them. General Truths generally do little good. That which is ſpoken to all, is ſpoken to none at al. No man heeds more than needs he muſt to ſuch things he hath little heart unto, or takes little delight in. An Inditement or Attachment without a name, read, publiſhed, and proclaimed in the face of the World, no man is either troubled at it, or reclaimed by it; but when the name is recorded, and the man challenged, it makes him bethink himſelf how to get a Surety, or pay the debt, or prevent the danger. So is it with a general reproof, no man will own it, and therefore no man reforms by it, or is forced to ſeek out. Thus *Nicodemus* never left cavilling before the Lord came home to his own perſon, and touched him to the quick, *John*, 3. 20. *Art thou a Maſter in Iſrael, and knoweſt thou not theſe things?* See and be aſhamed; a Maſter not to know that which a Scholler

Scholler might and should. It's not enough that we be stirring in the house, and people be up, but we must knock at mens doors, bring a Candle to their bed-sides, and pinch the sluggard, and then if he have any life he wil stir. While the Ministers of the Lord are preaching and publishing the Mind and Counsel of God in the Assemblies, there is some stirring in Gods house, but yet the secure person sits and sleeps on the stool as the sluggard in his bed, unless some special Application pinch him to the quick: then he begins to look up, and ask who is there? So it was with *David*, *thou art the man* did prevail more with him than al *the Parable*, 2 Sam. 12. As the noise of a piece afar off makes the Fowl listen, but one scattered shot that fals upon the wing or leg makes them cry and stir. All the common discourse came not neer *David*, but *thou art the man*; three words like three smal shot awakened him with a witness.

The Nature of the Word calls for this manner of dispensation as that which suits and serves best for the end and work of it. Reas. 3. It makes it hit sooner, and pierce more deeply and prevailingly into the heart: The speech of the Minister and his words are like darts and arrows, the right and particular applying them is the level carriage of them to the heart, and so they hit unavoidably, and fasten strongly thereupon. General discourses are like arrows shot a cock-height at al adventures without aim, and so without success or special profit, or powerful work upon the hearer; men come and go away not touched, not troubled, not affected with any thing. The word is compared to a *Sword*, the Explication is like the drawing of it. So the Truth in the naked Nature and vertue of it comes to be discovered; but the flourishing of the Sword wil never do the deed. But he that handles it suitable to the end and work of it, he must follow the blow if he purpose to force his Enemy either to fly or yield. So it is with the Truth: down-right blows

blows puts sometimes the most cunning Fencer past his Sence; so these cunning Hypocrites beyond all their Shifts. See how the Woman of *Samaria*, *John* 4. 18, 19. Put off our Savior with fond Cavils, sawcy and contemptuous Speeches, until our Savior met with her in particular, *Go call thy Husband*, she answers, *I have no Husband*; our Savior comes within her, *Thou hast had five Husbands, and he whom now thou hast is not thine Husband, in that thou sayest right*, thou poor sinful Adulteress; then she fel before our Savior. It is in a mans Spiritual as it is with a mans outward estate. The Bond lies forfeited, and the careless Debtor or Bankerupt he looks not out to pay. He hears the news of a Writ out for him, but sees none to arrest, and therefore he grows fearless. But when the Sergeant arrests him, and drags him to prison, you wil not provide for your debt to pay, provide then to go to prison, that makes him begin to send to friends, to gather up his debts, sel his Commodities, crave Baile and Surety. So it is with careless prodigal sinners which suffer their souls and salvations to lie forfeit, and yet look not out, until some particular word meet and make an arrest upon the soul, and the Minister by his Commission like the Sergeant seizeth upon him, you wil not forsake your sins, you must therefore perish in your sins. He then begins to bethink himself what to do.

Use, 1. *We here see the reason why there is so little good done by the Ministry of the Word upon the hearts of ungodly men*: Many Hypocrites lie skulking under the covers of deceit, and are not discovered; many proud hearts not humbled, but go on in their sturdy distempers; many sleepers sit and snort in their security, and go hoodwinked down to destruction, and see nothing before they sink into the pit. We do not knock at mens doors, we do not bring the light to their bed-sides, we do not pinch them indeed with sharp and particular reproofs, and those set on to purpose; we do not put them beyond

yond their fence, we do not keep them under the arrest of some conviction, so that they cannot make an escape; but each carnal reason rescues them from the hold of some common Truths that happily are delivered. Oh we level not, we hit not, we apply not the Word so home, so particularly as the occasions, conditions, corruptions of men require; and therefore it prevails not with that power, finds not that success which otherwise it might. Common Reproofs are like the confused noise in the Ship when the Mariners were rowing *Jonah* to the shore, notwithstanding all which, *Jonah* lies and sleeps under hatches: But when they go down to him, and laid hold upon him, and awakened him with a witness, *Arise thou sluggard, and call upon thy God, lest we all perish*, Jonah, 1. 5. He then began to bethink himself where he was, and what he had done; and then remembred that though he had feared and served the God of Heaven, yet by his rebellion, he had departed away from him. So here, all the while we take up mens minds, and exercise their Ears and thoughts with some hovering Discourses, and common words of course, *We are all sinners, In many things we offend all, All flesh is frail*; but I hope better things of you, I hope there is none such amongst you.

Those daubing discourses and roving reproofes, toothless, powerless dispensations, like arrowes shot a cock-height, they touch not, trouble not, and in the issue profit no man at all. They come proud and stubborn and perverse and careless, they sit so and returne so, day after day and year after year. But you should shake up a sinner, go down under the hatches to *Jonah* set upon the hearts of men in particular *Awake thou sluggard*. Thou a master of a family and teacheſt not, instructeſt not those that are under thee? Thou a servant yet stubborn and perverse, and submits not to those that are set over thee in the Lord? Art thou a Wife and doſt not reverence and obey with fear him whom

whom God hath made thy head and guide? Art thou a member of a Christian Congregation, and hast the name of Christ called upon thee, and art thou treacherous to the Covenant of Christ, oppoſest the government and ſpirit of Christ, and deſpiſest the ordinances of the Lord Jeſus? Awake you careleſs maſters and rebellious ſervants, perverſe wives, treacherous and faithleſs members; Know that your Religion is vain and your ſelves alſo while theſe diſtempers reſt in your boſom; cal upon your own hearts for Humiliation and repentance, and unto God for mercy that you periſh not. Thus when *Peter* was recovered out of his fal, and had the blood of Chriſt running warm in his veynes, and the power of the ſpirit of the Lord now ſetting on the right hand of the Father filling his heart with love to his Saviour and zeal for his glory; ſee how ſharply he applies the keeneſt reproofes to cut the Conſciences of al to whom he ſpeaketh without fear or partiality, *Acts.* 4. 10. 11. Be it known to you, *Oh ye rulers and all yee people of Iſrael, that by the name of Jeſus of Nazareth whom yee have crucified, you have ſlayn the juſt and inocent one and deſired a murderer to be given to you &c.* and ſee the ſucceſs, *God added daily to the Church ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.* It's *Cartwrights* expreſſion, when our ſaviour ſent out *the ſons of thunder then Satan fel like lightening from Heaven,* the right levelling the ordinances of Chriſt wil undoubtedly make battery in the kingdom of Satan; ſharp reproofs make ſound Chriſtians. It's a courſe which God commends in ſcripture, and hath not fayled to bleſs. *Judges* 2. 4. When the Angel pleaded the inditement ſo punctually ſo plainly againſt the people, their hearts brake al in pieces under ſuch blowes, *they lift up their voyces and wept,* they left cavilling and replying, and fell to weeping bitterly.

Uſe, 2. *Here ſee the reaſon why the beſt preaching finds the leaſt and worſt acceptance at the hands of rebellious ſinners,*

sinners, that which works, and troubles most, that they most distast, that which gives the least quiet to them, to that they give the least respect and liking. like children they love raw fruit which wil breed worms and sickness, rather then worme-feed though that would prevent both. So men love raw and windy discourses to please sinful humors, and corrupt hearts, rather than some bitter and particular reproofs which would make them sound in the Faith. *Ahab* wil nourish *four hundred false Prophets at his Table*, feed them with Dainties, and make choyce provision for them, that they may feed his humor, and speak good things to him; when he is not able to abide the sight, scarce to hear the name of *Micaiah* the Prophet of the Lord, who would speak the Counsel of the Lord without fear and partiality, 1 *Kings*, 22. So they in *Isai.* 30. 10. *They say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesie not unto us right things; prophesie smooth things*: such as might suit their sensual Appetites, and would down without chewing. And it's strange to see when such men have told a grave tale, and vented a heartless, toothless discourse, neither pith nor power in it; I say, it's strange to see what admiration and esteem such carnal hearts wil set upon such persons and expressions; great their parts, prudence, and discretion: Oh how sweet and seasonable their discourse, how glad to hear, and how unweariable to attend such: And al the while they may sit and sleep in their sinful condition, and neither have their Consciences awakened, nor their corruption discovered. Squeamish Stomachs had rather take Sugar-sops a whol week together than a bitter Potion one day. This is the Disease which *Paul* complains of as incident to the last Age of the World; and therefore adviseth his Scholler *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 4. 2, 3. *To be instant in season, out of season, convince, rebuke, exhort, for the time will come that men will not endure sound Doctrine; but according to*

their proper luſts, having itching Ears, will heap to themſelves Teachers: itching Ears muſt be ſcratched, not boxed.

Uſe 3. Information: *It's not only in the Liberty, but it's the Duty of a Miniſter, according as the Text ſuits, and the condition of the Hearers anſwer, to aim at the ſins of the perſons and people to whom he ſpeaks.* Particular application implies a ſpecial intendment of the parties, 1 *Kings*, 21. 20. When *Ahab* met *Elijah*, he ſalutes him on this manner, *Haſt thou found me, O mine Enemy?* He anſwers him, *I have found thee*, q. d. It was my duty to do ſo, and therefore I have endeavored it, and according to my deſire and endeavor I have accompliſhed it, I came on purpoſe. *Ezek.* 33. 8. *If the Watch-man do not warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man ſhall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at his hand.* The neceſſity of the people, the nature of the work which he intends, and the charge of his place which lies upon him, cals for this at the hands of a Miniſter. Will not common Sence conceive it reaſonable, that the Phyſitian diſcover the Nature of the Diſeaſe that troubles the Patient, and put in ſuch Ingredients as may purge the particular Humor; it's the choyceſt skil he can uſe, and the chiefeſt good he can do; and therefore he ſhould intend it and endeavor it in a ſpecial manner: Would you not have the Commander in the Field ſearch the particular diſorder in the Camp, and purſue the reformation of it in each ſpecial paſſage thereof. Herein the Faithful Execution of his place appears.

This I ſpeak the rather to cruſh that vain Cavil of captious Spirits; Why did not the Miniſter mean me, intend me? if the Word meet with their corruptions, and begin to ranſack and ſearch the feſtered ſores of their guilty Conſciences?

I Anſwer four things:

1. If thy heart miſgive thee that thou art guilty, he did mean

mean thee, he ſhould mean thee. If thy heart condemn thee, know that God is greater than thy Conſcience, and knows more than he can expreſs, or thou perceive in thy ſelf.

However it is, He had thee in his intendment in what he ſaid; If thou wert faulty, to reform the evil; if not faulty, to forewarn thee: For a faithful Miniſter ſhould intend the good of all in al it delivers, and they ſhould receive it. 2.

If happily thou be freed from the outward practice of the evil, yet thou haſt the ſpawn of it in thy ſoul, and that which wil provoke thee unto it, and that corrupt part hath given approbation to the evil; thou haſt not let thy ſelf ſo much againſt the evil, and that hath made thee ſo far ſhare in the evil, and ſo juſtly ſubject to ſhare in the reproof. Thus the Apoſtle chargeth the Jew, *Rom.* 2. 1. When the Jew would plead his Innocency from ſuch evils of the Gentiles, becauſe he is ready to condemn and judg them in that behalf, ſaies the Apoſtle, *Thou therefore that judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thy ſelf, for thou thy ſelf doſt the ſame things*; but it might have been replyed, We do not, we are not whiſperers, back-biters, guilty of fornication, malice, covetouſneſs, &c. Interpreters anſwer, that the Apoſtles meaning is, Though they committed not ſuch evils, yet the corruption of their Nature ſuited with them, and ſo ſhared in them, and therefore juſtly liable to the like Cenſure of the Law more or leſs. 3.

He meant what he ſaid, and what his words meant, *If there be any evil in them, bear witneſs of the evil*, John, 18. 23. and it's juſt a man ſhould bear his blame. Would'ſt thou fith more out of a mans meaning than thou canſt find in his words? I fear thou meaneſt to be a Caviller. It's a certain Argument of a captious and contentious diſpoſition, and commonly of a man that carries a galled Conſcience, that ſeeks waies and means to make a fault when he cannot find one. 4.

Uſe 4. *It's a word of Exhortation, 1. To Miniſters, 2. To People. To Miniſters, what they ſhould do: To the People, what they ſhould deſire.*

I. To the Miniſters: *They have a pattern here for their Practice.* If we wil be faithful to our Places, and the Work commended to our Care, faithful to the ſouls of the People; if we would further the Work of the Lord, and the Word, and ſee the fruit of our labors to the conviction and converſion of ſuch as belong unto Gods Council: This is Gods way in which we muſt walk if we purpoſe to find Gods bleſſing, that others may reap the profit, aud we the comfort of our pains at the great Day of our Account; we muſt by particular Application make men ſee their ſins, if ever we hope they ſhal ſee the Salvation of the Lord.

Directions. How to ſteer our courſe in this ſo tickle a Channel, and ſo tender a Work, theſe following *Directions* will not be unſeaſonable.

I. Firſt, *We muſt learn to bottom our Application upon the bleſſed Word of the Lord rightly apprehended, and opened plainly by undeniable Evidence.* Then our Application wil come with uncontroulable power to the Conſcience, when it comes guarded with Authority and demonſtration of the Truth; and men cannot but give way to thoſe Reproofs, when they cannot gainſay the evidence of Gods mind and Counſel therein. That however carnal hearts wil ſecretly be weary of them, yet they wil not dare openly to oppoſe them, becauſe they perceive that they muſt oppoſe the Counſel of God plainly diſpenſed therein, and in their own Conſcience alſo. Therefore I have ever judged it moſt ſeaſonable, if I would purſue a ſinful courſe breaking out, not by the by to pull it into a diſcourſe, but to take a Text on purpoſe, wherein it is plainly condemned. That the people may hear God in his Word ſpeaking before we ſpeak; this is to ſhew our Commiſſion before we do Execution, and this wil ſtop mens mouths. Never

ver balk any thing that is in the Text, never wreſt any thing out of the Text that is not there, for that ſavors too much of a mans own ſpirit or paſſion, or private ends, al which muſt be avoided as much as Hell. *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 11. not our fancies, or paſſions, or conceits, but let Gods Oracles be heard only.

2. It's lawful for a Miniſter ſo to caſt the mould, and carry the frame of his Application that the guilty parties may conceive it, and their Conſciences find and feel it, that they be the parties that the Lord points out, and intends of purpoſe to indite and purſue, *Matth.* 21. 41. 45. Thus our Savior laies out the corrupt carriages of the Scribes and Phariſees, and paints them out ſo lively that they felt him, and were forced to give in evidence of their own condemnation againſt themſelves; as in verſe 41. They ſay, *he will miſerably deſtroy thoſe wicked men*; and verſe 45. *When the chief Prieſts heard this, they perceived that he ſpake of them.*

3. In caſe either ſome falſe Opinions are ſpreading, or ſome corrupt and ſinful practices are like to grow and leven and that ſpeedily and dangerouſly, It's lawful in way of caution and prevention to diſcover mens ſins and errors in their own words, that others may avoyd them the better, and they be aſhamed of them the more Thus *Peter* diſcovers the faults and wretched behaviour of the Jewes to our ſaviour in their own words. *Acts.* 3. 14. *you denyed that holy and juſt one and deſired a murderer to be granted to you: Not him but Barabbas.* 1. Cor. 15. 22. *How ſay ſome among you, that there is no reſurrection?* Nay its lawful to name ſpecial perſons in an evil, if there may thereby be ſpecial warning given to others from falling. So *Paul* to *Timothy* 2. *Tim.* 1. 15. *of whom is* Phygellus *and* Hermogenes it's *Calvins* note upon the place, they were more famous, and therefore their Apoſtacy might be a means to draw others, therefore he gives warning concerning them.

them. If any man say this is to shame men, I answer their sins should be made shameful,& they should take shame for them, that they may sorrow for them and forsake them.

4. Let our Application go so wel guarded and fenced against al exceptions and cavils that a sinner may not be able to rescue himself or make an escape by carnal reason. As *Acts.* 6. 10. *It's said they were not able to resist the wisdome and the spirit by which he spake.* Math. 22. 34. our saviour Christ *put the* Sadducees *to silence.*

5. Let it be done with pity and tender compassion to mens souls, though with zeal and indignation against their sins. 2. *Tim.* 2. 24. 25. *the servant of the Lord must be patient and gentle towards al in meekneß instructing those that oppose themselves.* As a Chirurgeon may be most compassionate when he cutts most deep even to fetch up the core, and therefore the Apostle adds both to Titus, *shew all meekneß to all men,* and therefore to the Cretians and yet *rebukes them sharply. Titus.* 1. 13. He that is truly meek, and pities the souls of men most he wil shew least pity to their sins, all sharpneß of rebuke and yet al meekneß of spirit do wel accord.

second part of exhortation The exhortation to the people is that as ever you desire to see your sins and have your hearts brought to sorrow for them, you must desire it and delight in it, that you may have the light brought home to your souls in way of particular applycation to your own sins, there is no means so effectual as this, therefore desire God that your ministers may take such paines that they may speak to your Consciences.

1. Take three considerations here.

Weigh sadly that when the Minister speaks in way of Applycation so as to discover thy sins, he doth no more than he may, nay no more than he should in point of Conscience, his life lyes at stake if he should not deal plainly and faithfully. and therefore know its unreasonable

reasonable for thee to quarrel with the Minister, or with that he speaks when he hath the word for his warrant in what he does.

Look at the good of the dispensation of an ordinace and overlook the tartness of it. As some would not see but drink of the Physick minding the wholsomness and bearing with the unpleasantness of it for the present. As it's wearisom to the Surgeon to be raking in the sore, so it is to the Minister, but it is for thy good, and therfore though it be painful and cross to thy carnal affection yet thou shouldest take contentment in such a dispensation of the word as is such an effectual means of thy good. 2.

When thou findest thy heart skittish, consider that an under quiet taking in sharp reproof its a sound argument of the sincerity of thy heart and truth of thy love to God and his word. When a man beginns to be shaken in his Comforts, and a sharp and keen reproof comes home to a man, to force him to see and be humbled & reform his evil wayes, if he can willingly receive and yield himself to such a reproof it's a sign his heart is sincere in the sight of God when he saies as they did *Zach.* 13. 6. *these are the wounds I received in the house of my friends.* 3.

When they heard this.

We heard before that application and special discovery of our particular corruptions, what force it had to break the heart. We have here yet a Second means couched in the manner of the speech expressed in the Text. The word is read in the Participle, and carries a kind of indefinite endeavor with it, a bent of mind about that which was heard. *In hearing they heard it*, and when the Sermon was over, & they had received the message of the Lord delivered by the Apostle, when they (happily) were departed, yet that word departed not out of

of their Ears and hearts. They heard it over again, they mused upon it, it stuck by them, their thoughts recoiled afresh upon the consideration thereof, it pressed heavy upon their hearts; Conviction brings the sin, Application laies it, Meditation settles it upon the heart, that it sinks under it as unsupportable.

Hence then the Doctrine is,

Doct. *Through Meditation of sins applied, is a special means to break the heart of a sinner.*

As men that are stoned and pressed to death, while the stones are few that are cast, and the weight not great, may be they are troubled and wounded in some measure but their bones are not broken nor yet their lives hazarded, but while they stil continue flinging and adding to the number and weight, their bones break and their lives fayl under the overbearing pressure that is put upon them. A serious thought and right apprehension and application of a sin, toucheth and troubleth the sinner; but daily meditation flings in one terror after another, and followes the soul with fresh consideration of yet more sin, and yet more evil, and that more hainious and yet more dangerous beyond al pprehension and imagination; so that a sinner is stoned to death as it were and breaks under the burthen of it. Thus the repenting Church *Lam.* 3. 19. 20. *In remembring mine affliction, the wormewood and the gall my soul hath them still in remembrance and is humbled in me,* in remembring I remembred, they were daily musing and continually poring and that made them pierce inwardly; look as it is in the body it is so in the soul; meat minced if never chewed and digested, it never nourisheth; A potion prepared and given if not retayned and kept in the stomack it never purgeth or worketh kindly for cure, So here in the soul, Applycation carves out a fit potion of truth to the sinner, but Meditation

tation is that which digests it and makes good blood of it. Applycation compounds the potion, a particular reproof which is keen in the working brings it home, but meditation retaynes it, that so it may work kindly & put forth the proper powerful effect for the loosening of those loathsom lusts; which are like noysom and corrupt humours, which threaten the death and ruin of the soul. This is one thing which is undoubtedly implyed in that place by the consent of al interpreters that I know *Psal.* 77. 10. While the prophet was taking up his thoughts with attendance to his own distempers and sinful provocations, and the Lords departure from him by reason of the same, he sits down almost overwhelmed with the direful apprehension thereof, *I said this is my death, but I will remember the changes of the right hand of the most high*, this poring upon his own sins and miseries was his death, therefore he turns the tables and turns his thoughts another way and that was the cure of those discomforts, even the remembrance of the former, the former expressions of Gods favour and faithfulness its also one part of the meaning of that text, *Psal.* 40. 12. *My sins have taken such hold of me that I cannot look up*, when we lay hold upon them by serious meditation then they lay hold upon us, and when our minds attend not but slip aside from the serious consideration of them then they slip away from us.

For explication we shal.

1 Shew what this meditation is.

2 Apply the general Doctrine to the particular occasion, and see how this helps forward this work. Then,

3 We shal make use.

☞ Turn three leaves. — The next Copies are transpos

Look as the Searcher at the Sea-Port, or Cuſtom-houſe, or Ships, ſatisfies himſelf not to over-look careleſly in a ſudden view, but unlocks every Cheſt, romages every corner, takes a light to diſcover the darkeſt paſſages. So is it with Meditation, it obſerves the woof and web of wickedneſs, the ful frame of it, the very utmoſt Selvage and out-ſide of it, takes into conſideration all the ſecret conveyances, cunning contrivements, all bordering circumſtances that attend the thing, the conſequences of it, the nature of the cauſes that work it, the ſeveral occaſions and provocations that lead to it, together with the end and iſſue that in reaſon is like to come of it, *Dan.* 12. 4. *Many ſhall run to and fro, and knowledg ſhall encreaſe*: Meditation goes upon diſcovery, toucheth at every coaſt, obſerves every creek, maps out the dayly courſe of a mans converſation and diſpoſition.

2. The ſecond End of Meditation is, *It ſettles it effectually upon the heart.* It's not the paſhing of the water at a ſudden puſh, but the ſtanding and ſoaking to the root, that looſens the weeds and thorns, that they may be plucked up eaſily. It's not the laying of Oyl upon the benummed part, but the chafing of it in, that ſuppleth the Joynts, and eaſeth the pain. It is ſo in the ſoul; Application laies the Oyl of the Word that is ſearching and ſavory, Meditation chafeth it in, that it may ſoften and humble the hard and ſtony heart: Application is like the Conduit or Channel that brings the ſtream of the Truth upon the ſoul; but Meditation ſtops it as it were, and makes it ſoak into the heart, that ſo our corruptions may be plucked up kindly by the Roots.

This ſettling upon the heart appears in a three-fold work.

1. *It affects the heart with the Truth attended*, and leaves an Impreſſion upon the Spirit anſwerable to the Nature of the thing which is taken into Meditation: 2 *Pet.* 2. 8. It's ſaid of *Lot, in ſeeing and hearing, he vexed his righteous*

righteous soul. Many saw and heard the hideous abominations, and were not touched nor affected therewith. No more had he been, but that he vexed and troubled his own righteous soul, because he was driven to a dayly consideration of them which cut him to the quick. The word is observable, it signifies to try by a touch-stone, and to examine, and then upon search to bring the soul upon the rack: therefore the same word is used, *Matth.* 14. 24. *The Ship was tossed by the waves*; the consideration of the abominations of the place raised a tempest of trouble in *Lots* righteous soul. This the wise man calls *laying to the heart*, Eccles. 7. 1, 2. *It's better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of laughter; for this is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.* When the Spectacle of Misery and Mortality is laid in the grave, yet savory Meditation laies it to a mans heart, and makes it real there in the work of it. The Goldsmith observes that it is not the laying of the fire, but the blowing of it that melts the Mettal: So with Meditation, it breaths upon any Truth that is applied, and that makes it really sink and soak into the soul; and this is the reason why in an ordinary and common course of Providence, and Gods dealing with sinners, (leaving his own exceptions to his own good pleasure) that the most men in the time and work of Conversion have that scorn cast upon them, *that they grow melancholly.* And it's true thus far in the course of ordinary appearance; The Lord usually never works upon the soul by the Ministry of the Word to make it effectual, but he drives the sinner to sad thoughts of heart, and makes him keep an audit in his own soul by serious meditation, and pondering of his waies; otherwise the Word neither affects throughly, nor works kindly upon him.

2. *It keeps the heart under the heat and authority of the Truth that it's taken up withal, by constant attendance of his thoughts.* Meditation keeps the Conscience under

and fully than formerly we did, this is one thing in that of the Prophet *Hos.* 6.3. *Then shall yee know if you follow on to know*, when we track the foosteps of the truth, in al the passages, until we have viewed the whol progresse of it, from truth to truth from point to point. *This it is to dig for wisdom, Prov.* 2. 2 When men have found a mine or a veyn of Silver, they do not content themselves, to take that which is uppermost and next at hand within sight which offers it self upon the surface of the Earth, but they dig further as hoping to find more, because they see somewhat. So meditation rests not in what presents it self to our consideration, but digs deeper gathers in upon the truth, and gaynes more of it then did easily appear at the first, and this it doth.

1. 1 *When it recals things formerly past, sets them in present view before our consideration and judgment* Meditation sends a mans thoughts afar off, cals over and revives the fresh apprehension of things done long before, marshals them al in rank together, brings to mind such things which were happily quite out of memory, & gone from a man, which might be of great use and special help to discover our condition according to the quality of it; may be Conscience starts the consideration but of one sin, but meditation looks abroad, and brings to hand many of the same, and of the like kind and that many dayes past and long ago committed, This distemper now sticks upon a man and brings him under the arrest of Conscience and the condemnation thereof. But saies meditation let me mind you of such and such sins at such and such times, in such and such companies, committed and multiplyed both more and worse than those that now appear so loathsom and so troublesom to you; meditation is as it were the register and remembrancer, that looks over the records of our daily corruptions, and keeps them upon file, and brings them into court and fresh consideration *Job.* 13. 26. *Thou makest*

makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth: This makes a man to renew the ſins of his youth, makes them freſh in our thoughts, as though new done before our eyes. This Interpreters make the meaning of that place *Job.* 14.17. *My trangreſſion is ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſeweſt up mine iniquity*, though God do thus, yet he doth it by this means in the way of his Providence, *i. e.* by recounting and recalling our corruptions to mind, by ſerious meditation we ſew them all up together, we look back to the linage and pedegree of our luſts, and track the abominations of our lives, ſtep by ſtep, until we come to the very neſt where they are hatched and bred, even of our original corruption, and body of death, where they had their firſt breath and being, links al our diſtempers together from our infancy to our youth, from youth to riper age, from thence to our declining daies. So *David*, from the vileneſs of his preſent luſts is led to the wickedneſs *in which he was warmed*, Pſal. 51. 5. This was typed out in the old Law by *the chewing of the cud*; Meditation cals over again thoſe things that were paſt long before, and not within a mans view and conſideration.

2. Meditation *takes a ſpecial Survey of the compaſs of our preſent condition, and the Nature of thoſe corruptions that come to be conſidered*: It's the traverſing of a mans thoughts, the coaſting of the mind and imagination into every crevis and corner, pryes into every particular, takes a ſpecial view of the borders and confines of any corruption or condition that comes to be ſcanned, *Pſal.* 119. 59. *I conſidered my waies, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies*; he turned them upſide down, looked through them as it were; a preſent apprehenſion peeps in as it were through the crevis or key-hole, looks in at the window as a man paſſeth by; but Meditation lifts up the latch and goes into each room, pries into every corner of the houſe, and ſurveyes the compoſition and making of it, with all the blemiſhes in it.

Look

What Meditation is

For the firſt. *Meditation is a ſerious intention of the mind whereby wee come to ſearch out the truth, and ſettle it effectually upon the heart.*

1. *An intention of the mind*; when one puts forth the ſtrength of their underſtanding about the work in hand, takes it as an eſpecial task whereabout the heart ſhould be taken up and that which wil require the whol man, and that to the bent of the beſt ability he hath, ſo the word is uſed *Joſ.* 1. 8. *thou ſhalt not ſuffer the word to depart out of thy mind, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night*, when either the word would depart away or our corruptions would drive it away, meditation layes hold upon it and wil not let it go, but exerciſeth the ſtrength of the attention of his thoughts about it, makes a buiſineſs of it as that about which he might do his beſt, and yet fals ſhort of what he ſhould do in it. So *David* when he would diſcover where the ſtream and overflowing ſtrength of his affections vented themſelves, he points at this practice as that which employes the mind to the ful. *Pſal* 119. 197. *Oh how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day*, love is the great wheel of the ſoul that ſets al on going, and how doth that appear? it is my meditation day and night; the word in the original ſignifyeth to ſwim, a man ſpreads the breadth of his underſtanding about that work, and layes out himſelf about the ſervice wherein there is both difficulty and worth.

Serious.] Meditation is not a flouriſhing of a mans wit, but hath a ſet bout at the ſearch of the truth, beats his brain as wee uſe to ſay, hammers out a buiſineſs, as the Gouldſmith with his mettal, he heats it and beats it turnes it on this ſide and then on that, faſhions it on both that he might frame it to his mind; meditation is hammering of a truth or poynt propounded, that he may

may carry and conceive the frame and compaſs in his mind, not ſalute a truth as we paſs by occaſionally but ſolemnly entertain it into our thoughts; Not look upon a thing preſented as a ſpectator or paſſenger that goes by: but lay other things aſide, and look at this as the work and employment for the preſent to take up our minds. It's one thing in our diet to take a ſnatch and away, another thing to make a meal, and ſit at it on purpoſe until wee have ſeen al ſet before us and we have taken our fil of al, ſo we muſt not caſt an eye or glimpſe at the truth by ſome ſudden or ſleighty apprehenſion, a ſnatch and away, but we muſt make a meal of muſing. Therefore the Pſalmiſt makes it the main trade that a Godly man drives, profeſſedly oppoſite to the carriage of the wicked, whether in his outward or inward work, in his diſpoſition or expreſſion of himſelf in his common practice; whereas they walk in the corrupt counſels of their own hearts, ſtand in the way of ſinners, not only deviſe what is naught, but practice and perſevere in what they have deviſed, and ſit in the ſeat of the ſcorners; A bleſſed man his rode in which he travels, his ſet trade *he meditates in the Law of God day and night*: that is the counſel in which he walks, the way in which he ſtands, the ſeat in which he ſits. Look at this work as a branch of our Chriſtian calling; not that which is left to our liberty, but which is of neceſſity to be attended and that in good earneſt as a Chriſtian duty, which God requires, not a little available to our ſpiritual welfare.

The end is doubly expreſſed in the other part of the deſcription.

1 *The ſearching of the truth.*

2. *The effectual ſetling of it upon the heart.*

The ſearch of the truth: Meditation is a coming in with the truth or any cauſe that comes to hand, that we may enquire the ful ſtate of it before our thoughts part with it, ſo that we ſee more of it or more clearly

der an arreſt, ſo that it cannot make an eſcape from the Evidence and Authority of the Truth, ſo that there is no way, but either to obey the Rule of it, or elſe be condemned by it. But eſcape it cannot, Meditation meets and ſtops al the evaſions and ſly pretences the falſ-hearted perſon ſhal counterfeit. If a man ſhould deny his fault, and himſelf guilty, Meditation will evidence it beyond all gainſaying, by many teſtimonies which Meditation wil eaſily cal to mind; remember ye not in ſuch and ſuch a place: upon ſuch an occaſion, you gave way to your wicked heart to do thus and thus; you know it, and God knows it, and I have recorded it: If the ſinner would leſſen his fault, Meditation aggravates it; or if he ſeem to ſlight it, and look at it as a matter of no moment, yet Meditation will make it appear, there is greater evil in it, and greater neceſſity to beſtow his thoughts upon it than he is aware of.

Hence it is Meditation laies ſiege unto the ſoul, and cuts off al carnal pretences that a wretched ſelf-deceiving hypocrite would relieve himſelf by; and ſtil lies at the ſoul, this you did, at that time, in that place, after that manner; ſo that the ſoul is held faſt priſoner, and cannot make an eſcape; but as *David* ſaid, *Pſal.* 51. 3. *My ſins are ever before me*: Conſideration keeps them within view, and will not ſuffer them to go out of ſight and thoughts; and therefore it is *Paul* joyns thoſe two together, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Meditate in theſe things, and be in them.*

3. It provokes a man (by a kind of over-bearing power) to the practice of that with which he is ſo affected: A ſettled and ſerious Meditation of any thing, is as the ſetting open of the Flood-gates, which carries the ſoul with a kind of force and violence, to the performance of what he ſo beſtows his mind upon; as a mighty ſtream let out turns the mill. *Phil.* 4. 9. *Think of theſe things, and do them*: thinking men are doing men. *Pſal.* 39. 3. *While I was thus muſing, the fire brake out*

out, and I spake: the busie stirring of Meditation is like the raising of a tempest in the heart, that carries out all the actions of the man by an uncontroulable command. *I considered my waies, and turned my feet unto thy Statutes*: right Consideration, brings in a right Reformation with it.

The Nature of the Duty is thus opened; let us apply it now to the particular, and give in the Reasons of the Truth, why this Meditation brings in this Contrition, and heart-breaking.

I might argue from the former Description, that which makes a through search of our sins, and settles them effectually upon the soul, that is a fit means to break our hearts with them; but thus meditation doth, as it hath been formerly disputed, therefore it is a fit means to break the heart.

But I shall add a double Argument briefly; they both shal be taken from the special effects of Meditation, which are marvelous pregnant to this purpose. These come neerer to the Point in hand, and apply the general Doctrine to this special occasion.

Meditation sharpens the sting and strength of corruption, that it pierceth more prevailingly; It draws out the venom, the quintessence of the evil of a corruption, and lets in that upon the heart and conscience of a sinner, which stings and torments him in greatest extremity: makes him see more in his distemper than ever he suspected, makes him feel it far worse than ever he could have imagined it could have been. As it is in the Art of Chymistry and Distillation, by their dexterity and skil in that course; they draw out the very spirits of the Metral, or Herb, or Liquor, as the Spirits of Wine, the Oyl of Gold, &c. and five drops of that wil work more strongly than five ounces, five spoonfuls of the Body of the Herb, or Water in the gross, because there is nothing but Spirits as it were gathered togeher in a narrow room, and therefore they are active in the highest de- Reas. 1.

gree. If it be Spirits of Poyson, it kils suddenly, it's present death, past recovery; if of Cordial or Preservative, they comfort and refresh beyond imagination, speedily and strangely. So here; Meditation is this Spiritual Chymistry, or the art of holy Distillation, which draws out the Spirits of the poyson and bitterness that is in corruption, Spiritualizeth the plague and venom of the vengeance that attends every transgression; and though it was never so small in the eye of the world, yet it stings the heart more than the greatest evil which is committed, if not mused on, nor attended.

Thus *David* when by consideration he had viewed over his course, saw the infinite loathsomness of it, that it sunk his heart; which for the while, when he attended it not, did not stick upon him, nor trouble him. He looks now at the root of sin whence it came, at the extent in the highest strain in spiritual wickedness: *Against thee, thee only have I sinned,* Psal. 51. 4. I said in my haste, in my sudden foolish apprehension, it was but against a man, my Servant, my Subject, and Vassal, and therefore no such great matter nor grievous evil, it I as a Prince did gratifie my own desire; but now I see it was against thee, thee only, the God of Justice, and Mercy, and Fidelity, and Truth. That was the extent of it, how far it went. Again, *Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God*: he now saw upon more serious consideration, it was not a point of Policy, a slight of subtil and secret conveyance that would color over the business, and free him from blame, because he intimated his mind to *Joab* to act it. But now he saw it was not *Joabs* treachery, *nor the Sword of the Children of* Ammon, 2 *Sam.* 11. but it was he that had taken away the life of *Uriah*: The dead body of *Uriah* was dished out to him as his break-fast every morning. Thus for the extent of it. Again, upon consideration he looks to the rise of it; *Thou Lord lovest Truth in the inward parts*: Now he judgeth [illegible]

his welcoming of *Uriah*, his pretence of care to send him to his own house, was nothing but apparent treachery against the Law of God, and light of his Conscience, and knowledg which the Lord had set up in him. The root that bred and fed these bitter fruits, was his base heart, and body of sin, yet not so mortified, which he brought from his Cradle, which the Lord loaths, as a God of Truth who loves Truth, who may justly condemn him and reject him for his departing from it, doubling and dissembling in a continual falsifying to *Uriah* by all his fair speeches, and glozing pretences, he seemed to express his respect unto him.

Meditation doth not only pinch the heart with the present apprehension of sin committed, *but by the dayly attendance upon the evil of iniquity now considered, it holds the heart upon the rack under restless and unsupportable pressures*; 2 Pet. 2. 8. *Lot* dayly seeing and hearing of the loathsomness of their hideous and unnameable abominations, *vexed his righteous soul*: Many saw and heard as much as *Lot*, and happily more, and yet were never troubled thereby: no more would he have been, but that he tormented his righteous soul by the dayly consideration, of those abominations practiced. The word βασανίζω is marvelous pregnant: It signifies, 1. To prove and examine by means of the rack, or by way of torment, to make inquisition touching the Truth. So *Lot* kept his soul upon the rack of restless vexation, as by the continual hearing, so by the constant consideration of the hellish villany of the Sodomites; and therefore the Evangelist useth it to signifie the boisterousness of a storm when the Sea is raged by the wind to the height of violence and rage: *Matth.* 14. 24. Meditation raiseth a storm or tempest of disturbance in the soul. A sudden and present apprehension, a slushy thought of the evil of sin, is like the flourish of a Sword afar off, which a man neither feels nor fears at the utmost; it's but like the glaunce and fall of a blow,

2.

which it may be ripples the skin, whereas deep and through Meditation is as it were doubling of the blow, that ſteddy recoyling of a mans thoughts, is the ſtabbing of the heart through, and through again, makes the ſinner bleed inwardly and abundantly. When the ſinner would put by the ſtroke of the Truth, and ſhake off the danger of the ſin now diſcovered, and applied, and ſet on, Meditation follows the blow home, and puts the ſoul beyond its fence, nay, it is ſo, it muſt be ſo, it wil be ſo: beleeve it, and expect it, for you ſhal find it worſe than others do expreſs, or you can conceive; for this is the voyce and verdict which Meditation gives in. The Prophet *Jeremy* expreſſeth the nature of the departure of the people from the Lord, thus: *It is an evil and a bitter thing that thou haſt departed away from the living God*, Jer. 2. 19. And yet *Job* tels us, and experience and profeſſion of the wicked proclaims it to al the world, *That wickedneſs is ſweet in the mouth of the ungodly, he hides it under his tongue; though he ſpare it and forſake it not*, Job, 20 12, 13. *but keep it ſtill within his mouth*, as a pleaſing morſel to his pallate. If you ask the reaſon why theſe bitter pills ſeem ſo ſweet to a baſe heart? Amongſt other Reaſons, this is one; It fares with a mans ſins as ſomtimes we ſee it in the Phyſick of the body; bitter pils if they be ſwallowed of a ſudden, there is little ſence of the bitter and unpleaſant taſt of them, or at leaſt it laſts not long: but if they be chewed over and over, they wil then appear as they are, and a man wil be compelled to confeſs the extream bitterneſs that is therein. So it is with wickedneſs to a carnal heart: Your pride, and ſtubbornneſs, perverſneſs, and rebellion, and careleſsneſs, and lazineſs, and your noyſom uncleanneſs, they are a pleaſant morſel to your prophane and ſenſual hearts, you rol them under your tongues, and take delight in them; it's becauſe you ſwallow them down without any chewing, any ſerious conſideration; you ſwallow down your pride, and wayward-

waywardness, and disobedience; whereas did you but chew these things, and weigh them in a right consideration, you would then feel that which one day you shall find, there is bitterness in the end.

3. *Meditation is that which encreaseth the weight of the evil of sin, presseth it down upon the Conscience, and burdens the heart with it until it break under it.* It gleans up, and rakes together al the particulars, adds dayly to the load, and laies on until the Axletree split asunder, and the heart fails and dies away under the apprehension of the dreadfulness of the evil. This some, and those very judicious, make the meaning of that inference and dependance, *Job*, 14. 16, 17. *Thou sealest up my transgression in a bag, and sewest up my iniquity together, and surely the mountain falling cometh to nought*; i. e. Thou heapest up the hideous remembrance of al my provocations, and surely neither rocks, nor mountains, nor any power was able to bear, and not break under the unsupportable weight thereof. As it is in War, when the numbers are few, and the parties that give the onset, are weak and feeble, it's not hard then either to resist their power, or avoid and escape their pursuits; but when many thousands, it may be some hundreds of thousands joyn al forces together to give the onset, they usually say they overbear the contrary party, and break their ranks with their very numbers and croud of the multitudes that overlay them utterly. It's so in this Spiritual contestation with the sinful distempers of our hearts; it may be we spend some few and flashy thoughts about them, and look over them after a heedless manner, when either the Truths of God are dispensed to our conviction, or our sins discovered; they neither touch nor trouble our hearts, we cast off such thoughts, or cast them away, or break through them easily: But Meditation musters up new Armies of Arguments, levies and cals in new forces of all special particular, aggravating circumstances, whereby the enormousness

nousnes of the evil is so abundantly brought home with that overbearing evidence to the heart, that 't's forced to fall under it.

You say it was your infirmity, you were ignorant and knew it not, it was a temptation that surprised you, you were not aware of it, the matter was not great and therefore you hope there is a place for pardon & pity, so that neither others need to be offended, or you troubled for it. Think it over again, call meditation to counsel, when you have sent your thoughts afar off, and viewed the compass of thy course with all the considerate circumstances that attend thereupon be it but the casting aside of the command of a superior, in a common and ordinary occasion of thy calling, see to what it will amount when meditation hath cast all into the balance. It will appear the thing was open and easy, that whereof thou hast been often forewarned often commanded to the contrary, when there was no trouble to do it, no profit to neglect it, and therefore there was no pretence or temptation from without to take thee aside and therefore thou didst it wittingly, willingly, ordinarily against knowledg and conscience, against the promises thou hast made to man, confessions thou hast made to God confessed and continued in this evil. The less the thing, the worse thy heart, the greater thy offence that will trample a command under thy feet, for a trifle, thy spirit never affected with this, nor hast made Conscience of it to this day. This argues a heart not that hates sin but *hates to be reformed Prov.* 13. 13. Its a Hellish heedlesnes of a graceless heart, it shakes the evidence of thy estate, and hope of any comfort, This is the reckoning thou must make, hear and know it for thy good sales meditation, for so it is. *He that reverenceth a command shall live. But he that despiseth a command shall die for it.* This is thy estate and thy misery this is that which broke the heart of *Peter* exceedingly *Mark.* 14. 72. though the Cock had crowed, and Christ looked upon

upon him yet he ſtood it out, *but when he remembred the words of our Saviour and thought thereon, then he wept.* When he bethought himſelf, had caſt all things together brought in the bills of account, he went out and wept bitterly, he layd al the heightning circumſtances together that he who was not only a Chriſtian but entertained as a ſervant, called as an Appoſtle of Chriſt who was fore-warned of his backſliding, had promiſed, reſolved ſo ſtrangly againſt it, that he ſhould not only forſake his maſter cloſely, but openly deny and renounce him, yea helliſhly blaſpheme and curſe, and that ſo often, and now eſpecially in this time of trouble, in the day of our Saviours diſtreſs, when the innocency of his cauſe, the honor of his perſon, yea his life was at hazard; that ſuch a ſervant and Apoſtle ſhould ſo baſely and blaſphemously forſwear and renounce his maſter and Redeemer and that upon ſo ſlight an occaſion, as the voyce of a Damſel, &c. he layed al theſe together and layd them to his heart, he was not able to hold, he went out and wept bitterly.

Here is matter of Humiliation to every ſoul in the ſight of God, who may ſit down in ſilence & return home with ſhame to our own habitations, and here with ſad hearts recal and remember our ſins this day, and lift up our guilty hands to heaven for the neglect of ſo holy a duty which is grown ſo far out of date and men are grown ſo far from lending their endeavor to the diſcharge of this duty, that (as they ſpeak of the Holy ſpirit in another caſe, moſt may ſay of this) they make it a queſtion whether ever there was ſuch a thing, ſuch a ſervice in the world ſome are faulty in a greater, ſome in a leſſer degree, but al in one degree or other, are juſtly to be condemned as coming exceeding [illegible] and ſo fall ſhort of Gods pre[illegible] falling upon us and miſs in the [illegible] would do and the comfort we ſhould [illegible] we ſhould go aſide and plead the

Uſe.

1.

the ſentence of the defiled leaper, *behold I am unclean I am unclean, Levit.* 13. 45. every man fayles in this, let every man ingeniouſly own and acknowledg his ſin and thats the beſt way to make us to be humbled and abaſed for it, let every man lay his hand upon his heart, take it to himſelf. Oh this laying aſide the duty of meditation its my ſin, ſo ſay yee husbands and anſwer yee wives, its our ſin alſo; ſpeak yee parents to your children this is our ſin we have not practiſed nor taught it, anſwer the children and confeſs, no wonder we did not know it therefore never did it nor never could endeavor after it. And its our ſhame, each man hath a mind and can ſpend it unweariably where he ſetts himſelf, ſet but the covetous man about the world, the voluptuous man about his pleaſure, each man about his comforts and conveniences and we ſit at it, nay no man wil ſuffer his thoughts to be taken off from theſe, they eat with them, drink with them, walk with them, talk with them. What a loathſom thing is it, others muſe how to commit ſin and we not how to redreſs it, they meditate how to contrive their own ruin, and ſhal not we how to prevent it?

Shortly; there be two ſorts of people whom this matter of complaint may eſpecially concern, and thoſe are either ſuch, 1. Who ſtand in profeſſed oppoſition to this practice; 2. Who continue in an open neglect thereof, and conceive they may have a diſpenſation for their careleſneſs.

1. Firſt thoſe who were typed out by the unclean beaſts in the Law, who never chew the cud nor cal over their courſes by ſerious meditation, *who ſtudiously endeavour to contrive all waies and means how they may take off their minds from this ſervice*; their care for themſelves and their counſel alſo unto others, is to ſhake off theſe dumpes as they cal them; they look at this mopiſh kind of Melancholly muſing, as a practice deeply prejudicial to their peace and comfort, conceive it as a piece

a piece of extream folly, as though a man ſhould not find trouble enough in the world, but ſhould deviſe means to torment and vex his own ſoul; and therefore they avoyd the meditation of the danger of their ſins, as their rack and engine of unſufferable vexation, and that upon a double ground; partly, that they might not be croſſed in their ſenſual courſes, but that they might have elbow room and go on with eaſe in their ungodly luſts, wheras the conſideration of the danger of our ſinful miſcarriages, damps & daſhes mens delights, deads mens endeavors, and hearts, knocks off their wheels that they draw heavily, ſpoyls al the ſport as we ſay, and deprives them of the pleaſures they did expect. Therefore it is a rule of revelling, *Amos.* 6. 3. 4. 5. *they put far away the evil day*, and then cauſe the ſeat of violence to draw near, &c. q.d. the thoughts of that would ſpoyl the other. Partly, it ariſeth from hence, the privy guilt of their own Conſciences makes their hearts miſgive them; The number of their abominations is ſo great, the nature ſo hainous, the plagues ſo direful and dreadful which attend upon them as their due that they are afrayd to view, the ugly viſage of their ſins, or to take a right ſcantling of the dreadful plagues they muſt expect, and therefore ſtudy to forget both, that they may not be tyred with either, as bankerupts are loth to view their account books when they cannot pay their debts, they would not remember what they are not able to ſatisfy.

To theſe men I would ſay two things. 1. *By way of terror to awaken them.* 2. *By way of advice to counſel them.*

Let them know their folly. *When they would avoyd their miſerie they take the only way to encreaſe it.* They keep in the fire, and make it flame more; dam the ſtream and cauſe it to ſwel over the banks; while they defer the accounts they encreaſe the debt and the danger alſo. You wil not ſee your ſins, you ſhal ſee them, 1.

you wil not ſee them here by the light of the word for your Humiliation, you ſhal ſee them by the flames of Hell fire, and there be forced to read over al your wretchedneſs for your everlaſting ruin, you would not have your hearts break for them while there was hope to be eaſed, you ſhal burn in the bottomleſs pit when you wil be beyond hope ever to be recovered. Thou wouldeſt forget them, and caſt them behind thy back: know aſſuredly thy diſtempers wil meet thee like an armed man, God wil mind thee of them, *Theſe things thou haſt done, and ſet them in order before thee and tear thee in pieces when there wil be none to deliver thee*, Pſal. 50. 21. 22. Then thou wilt curſe thy ſelf and thy careleſneſs, and wiſh, oh that I had hearkened, oh that I had conſidered.

2. Let this counſel be acceptable to ſuch. *fear to commit ſin but never be afrayd to ſee it*, and ſurvey the vileneſs of it to the ful, and the worſe they appear to thy apprehenſion, the better and more ſafe thy condition and eſtate is. A right and ful knowledg of a diſeaſe is the ready means to cure it. Do thou remember them, God wil forget them; let them be in thy ſight and the Lord wil caſt them out of his, and turn away his face from thy ſins, when thou wilt turn thy mind and thoughts to a through conſideration and reformation of them *Jerem.* 31.18.19.20. *I have heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf &c. I will ſurely have mercy upon him ſaith the Lord.*

2. Another ſort though they give allowance and approbation to the duty propounded, *yet they have many pretences to plead, why either (as their caſe ſtands) they may be exempted or diſpenſed withall in the neglect of it*; 1 Here then comes into ſcanning and conſideration the hinderances the men plead which may excuſe the omiſſion of the Duty. 2. The wayes and helps how to remove them, which go hand in hand. We ſhal handle both together, namely the cauſes and the cure of this neglect.

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The first and main hindrance whereby men are taken off from this so spiritual a service, *is a conceit that goes current in the world that its matter only of indifferency this daily meditation*; and so left by God himself and therefore we should not exact more than the Lord requires, and so lay burdens upon men, when we would profess we cal for obedience at their hands; and therefore we should not impose a needless necessity upon men but leave it to their Christian liberty, *he that can receive it let him*, (as our Saviour in another case) he that doth not, cannot be blamed. You have the cause, attend now the cure; you see the hindrance, consider the help, that may remove this stone out of the way. *Hindrance, 1.*

1. Know then, It was the profession of the Prophet *David* that he would *take up this service* Psal. 119. 15. *I will meditate in thy precepts and have respect unto thy wayes*, vers. 23. *Princes did sit and speak against me but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes* again ver. 48. *I wil meditate in thy statutes.* And he doth not this as a special conveniencie nor yet as a peculiar duty proper to him, but upon such grounds as belong to al, and therefore wil cal for it of al; *vers.* 97. *Oh how I love thy Law, it is my meditation al the day.* Thou wilt not deny but thou art bound to love the Law of God, and then certainly if that cause be there, this effect wil of necessity follow. Nay its the guise of al the Saints *Psal.* 1. 1. 2 its as necessary as not to sit in the seat, walk in the counsells, and stand in the way of sinners, so necessary is it to meditate in the Law of God, and that to have thy set meals, thy appointed times and turns for meditation. *Answ.*

2. The want of this *is given as the cause why men are carryed head long to the Practice of loathsom evils.* Isay. 44. 19. *No man considereth in his heart.* Jer. 8. 6. *I hearkened and heard, but they spak not aright No man sayes with himself what have I done?* the

want of this hastens the righteous judgments of the Lord *Psal.* 28. 5. *because they regard not the operation of his hands, therefore he will destroy them and not build them up.*

3. The use of this affects and fits the heart to the duties that are to be discharged. It's a preparative to many daily performances in our Christian course, it quickens the holy dispentations of the soul, chargeth it with confessions and petitions seasonable and savory that they may be delivered with feeling and affections when *the heart is boyling of a good matter*, Psal. 45. 1. So Psal. 102. 1. *I will pour out my meditation* that is his prayer; meditation was the mint or Anvil upon which our prayers should be made. And therefore Divines refer it to the third Commandment as that which is an Harbenger to all holy duties we do to God, stirring up the faculties of the whol man, to that reverend attendance which becomes the majesty of the Almighty, *Eccles.* 5. 1. and the advice of the wise man is *to look to our feet*, as in the publick so in private also.

3. As by way of preparation it fits for spiritual services before we do them, *so it confirms and settles the good of them unto our souls* when they are done *then shal your profiting appear, if you meditate upon these things* 1 Tim. 3. 15. Sermons wil not profit though we hear and that attentively. Sacraments wil not profit, conference, reading wil not profit, though we studiously for the present turn & bestow our selves therupon, unless we meditate afterward. As exercise before meat to stir up the stomach to receive meat, So digestion after meat, if we hope to have any strength, meditation is both, it stirs up the affection to the duty, and then digests the good and sap of the service and turns it into good blood. *Tuum illud est quod Meditatio facit tuum.*

Hind. 2. Secondly. *Men complain they have no time, occasions so many, buisines crouds in so with such multitudes*

tudes, our minds, and heads, and hearts, and thoughts are so taken up, one crouds out another, we have no time.

Answ. I Answer, 1. Hast thou no time to repent, and to break thy heart for sin? no time to fit and quicken thy Spirit to Service? no time to profit by al the Spiritual means? Then have no time to be saved, to maintain the comfort and peace of thy Conscience.

2. Must God only be loser, and his Worship go to the wal? must he only be crouded out of our minds, and heads, and hearts? how unreasonable is this?

3. *Redeem the time*, Eph. 5. 16. Pluck some opportunity, and rescue it from meat, and sleep, and company, and recreation, *Psal.* 119. 148. *I prevent the morning watches that I might meditate in thy Statutes*: he had as many imployments as thou, being a King, and yet he did attend this Duty; so mayest thou, and so shouldest thou.

4. I desire no more time to this Duty in the day, than each day thou squandrest and spendest away unprofitably: and let any man observe his own course, and record but his expence, and that needlesly of his time, he wil say, thus much I spent vainly here, and thus much there, and why might not that have been spent in meditation for the helping forward of the Work of God in my soul?

Hind. 3 The great Complaint is, *The unsteadiness of their own thoughts*, which (as they conceive) proceeds from some kind of natural feebleness, whereby they are wholly disenabled in their own apprehension, and common experience, to keep their minds to any set imployment and exercise in this so serious a work of Meditation, they are so off and on upon every occasion, a flitting and wandring frame of Imagination, that cannot dwel upon a thing; nay, though they resolve it sadly, withdraw themselves from al other occations into their private Closets, and there retire and set themselves on purpose

purpose about this business, as being convinced it is so needful, and being perswaded it would be so profitable to them, yet immediately they are taken off, they are gone from their task, when they had begun now to bestow their attention upon the Duty; that look what a shaking palsey is to the head, there is no stilling of it, while a man lives it wil follow him; so this shattering and giddiness of our minds, unsettles us when we would be most serious, and doth accompany us in every retired corner, and that upon every turn, as a disease and distemper of our natural apprehension; and it seems there is an impossibility to reform this feebleness, and therefore we hope we may be excused if we cannot perform this service, which is so necessary, and which we also endeavor, but as al men may see, we cannot accomplish.

Answ. I Answer,

1 *Generally.*

2 *Particularly.*

Be it, that this shaking Palsey, this *Vertigo* and giddiness of Spirit, be a disease which hath seized upon the faculty of the Understanding as an hæreditary Curse, which comes from the sin of *Adam*, and is communicated more or less to al his Seed. Thou shouldest labor to look at it as a sickness, and therefore not to maintain a disease, but seek a Remedy how thou maiest be recovered out of it. Thy understanding is ful of blindness; and ignorance naturally is one part of the image that was imprinted upon thee by the nature of thy first Parents received; thou wouldest not therefore plead for thy ignorance, and sit down wel satisfied with it, but be more studious to amend it, and seek to Heaven, and be studious and painful in the use of al means that thou mayest be healed and cured of it: So do here; take this giddiness of mind, as a fruit of the forbidden tree, as a curse of that carelessness and non-attendance which surprized our first Parents, whereby they slipped aside from under the stream of Gods Providence and blessing, and

and so undid themselves and al their Posterity; only see the evil of it, and seek to be freed and delivered therefrom.

Several things I would suggest here by way of help.

See what is the breeding and the feeding root, the next and immediate cause of this fickle and unsteady roving of thy mind, and redress that, and the Cure will follow, and the cause will be most easily thus discovered, and so also removed.

Observe whether those wandring thoughts that are flitting and roving in a restless manner from one thing to another, like your fluttering Butterflies which fall upon many Herbs, but settle and draw out Honey from none: observe I say, whether those unsteady thoughts pass upon the multitude and variety of things, which have no coherence one with another, no dependance one upon another, but here and there, and every where, as your vagrant beggars that have no settled abode: or else observe, though a mans thoughts be full of variety and uncertainty, straggling here and there, and compassing many coasts to and again, yet for the issue, they border and Butt for the most part upon some one subject, or aim at one thing mainly, though Spannel-like they coast up and down, and cross al waies, and meet with multitudes in their course, yet their game is that which at last they look at. So here.

1. *If the variety and wandring of thy imaginations be of the first kind, it issues meerly out of the frothiness and emptiness of thy understanding*, and the wound lies in the vanity of that faculty: As it is with a Boat or Barque that is put to Sea, if neither fraught nor ballast, every wave tosseth it too and again, the least breez of wind that blows, almost overturns it, because it's empry, wants ballast, and therefore must needs sail unsteadily: So here, when the Understanding is not ballasted with the blessed Truths of God, is not fraught and furnished with the Wisdom, and Holiness, and Comfort of the

Word, by which it ſhould both receive light and ability to ſtere our Chriſtian Courſe according to the ſtability and guidance of the Rule, it floats up and down with froathy and fooliſh apprehenſions.

The Cure then is here plain; If thy wandrings come from this cauſe, ſtore thy underſtanding with the Heavenly Truths of the Lord, let thy mind be furniſhed and traught with the rich and precious Promiſes, Commands, and Comforts of the Word; let them be ballaſted with theſe, and they wil make thy thoughts ſteady and ſetled in thy conſtant and dayly imployments. Thus the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 4. 14. when he perſwades, *that they be no more children carried up and down with every wind of Doctrine*; and thoſe are nothing but the devices and conceits of men, the ſleight of mens brains; he adds verſe 15. *Truth in Love*: to the word, attend thou the Truth, and have thy mind taken up with that, and poſſeſſed by the power thereof: this wil make a man ſteady and unmovable, that nothing may take him aſide. Therefore *David* makes that Cohærence, as though the one would undoubtedly bring in the other: *I hate vain thoughts*; how did he attain that? *Thy Law do I love*, Pſal. 119. 113. It's the Phyſitians direction for the ſtare of our bodies; the beſt way to fence the ſtomach againſt wind, and the head againſt lightneſs, which comes by that, is to feed heartily, and make a ful meal of that which is cordial and nouriſhing, nothing better to expel wind, and preſerve againſt it. So it is in the ſtate of thy ſoul, To preſerve our minds from windy and vain imaginations, is to have our underſtandings fully taken up with the bleſſed Truths of God as our dayly and appointed food.

2. If thy wandring thoughts *be of the ſecond kind*; ſuch as be ranging up and down upon the variety of many Objects, yet in the end they ever border upon the ſame thing, *It's then certain, the wound lies in the affection firſtly.* Some affection or other, either of love, fear, ſorrow,

sorrow, hatred, is inordinate and violent, and that transports a mans apprehensions and thoughts, to Lackey after it, and to send post from one coast to another quarter, to lay out themselves in what ever special occasions shal present themselves that may give satisfaction. As for instance, when the covetous wretch is forced and constrained by Conscience to set himself in a serious Meditation about his own estate; he is no sooner retired into his Closet to attend that work, but forthwith his affections present some earthly object, starts something which concerns the benefit of his outward estate, as one while may be the hazard of a debt, that he is now like to lose, his debtors estate growing low, and he behind hand, and that he persues as a game for the while; when he hath run himself out of breath there, and gone as far as he can, anon there starts a fresh Hare, a bargain that was of late offered him, and he conceives there may be a booty in that, that he also follows with much eagerness, laies out his thoughts to the utmost, how he may contrive and compass it according to his desire: No sooner is he off from that, but then sends post hast to his Lot, and Harvest, there he is casting about how to order al to advantage. Here are now roving imaginations that range over hedg and ditch in much variety, but stil they aim at the same thing, border all together upon earthly contentments, and how to compass them, they do centre there stil; therefore it's an Argument undeniable, the unsteadiness of thy thoughts arose from this distempered Affection. The like I may say of the unclean person, whose affections are fastened upon his lusts, he sends his thoughts far and wide how to prevent what he fears, how to bring about what he desires; one while he looks at the injury that some did unto him, that stood in his light, and crossed him in his intended course and match, his mind wholly taken up with the consideration of the greatness of the wrong that hath been done him, busied with diligent search and enquiry how to

prevent their proceedings, how to repay them in their own coyn, and to deal harshly with them, because they dealt subtilly or unkindly with him. Another while he is suiting himself with al conveniency that either means or friends can make, purchasing such outward comforts, and that with diligence, pains, and dividing cares, because he knows such outward trappings of wealth, and state, and lands, wil be very advantagious to accomplish his own ends. Here be variety of thoughts, which fetch a compass far and wide about many particulars; yet they aim al at this, how to satisfie his sensual desires, therefore the wound was there. The Marriner, because the Channel is narrow, and the wind somwhat scant, he toucheth in many places, tacks about, and fetcheth many points, but stil because it's to attain the Haven; therfore each man in reason concludes, that was the cause that invited him to al that variety in his course. It's so in the carriage of the soul; the cause why a man fetcheth such a compass, and tacks about in his own contrivements; now this, now that; one while one way, another while this or that presented and pursued busily; yet in the issue we land al our thoughts, and look at the last how to bring in content to such a lust: It's certain the vanity of that lust occasioned and drew the vanity of thy thoughts after it.

The cure 1. The Cause being thus conceived, the Cure is fair and easie to comprehend; namely, *Cure these inordinate and raging lusts*, and thence wil follow a stil and quiet composure of mind; purge the stomach if it be foul, and that wil ease the pain of wind in the Head, because that is caused by the fumes that arise from thence. Take off the plummet, or lessen but the weight of it, the minutes though they hurried never so fast before, yet wil not move at all, or at least very slowly and quietly. So here, take off the poyse of the affections, purge away these noysom lusts which carry and command the head, and send up dunghil steams which distemper the mind,

and

and disturb it, and those windy imaginations wil cease, and those thoughts of the mind like the minutes, either wil not move, or move in order and manner as may help and not hinder. Here the great skil and care ought to be to labor the clensing and sanctification of such affections which are most tainted, and where the vein and sourse of original corruption, either through custom, or constitution, or company, hath vented it self most usually, and so hath taken up the soul, and gained, and so exercised greater power over it. For as in bruised or weak parts, all the humors run thither, so commonly this corruption is the sink and drain of the soul, all distempered thoughts, and other inferior lusts, empty themselves, and become Servants unto this. If once the affections had gained such a tast and relish of the sweetnes that is in Christ, and his Truth, that al these baggage and inferior things here below seemed sapless, and that the heart were endeared to him & his Truth, and carried strongly after both: this would carry the thoughts vehemently, & keep them so strongly to both, that they would be so far from wandring away from Christ, that they would not be taken from bestowing the strength of their intentions about him, *Psal.* 119 97. *Oh how I love thy Law, it is my Meditation all the day*; verse 93. *I will never forget thy Precepts, for thereby thou hast quickened me*; ver. 23. *Princes sate and spake against me, but thy servant did meditate in thy Statutes.* In reason he would have conceived it was high time for him to bethink himself how to prevent their fury, & it would cost him sad thoughts of heart how to provide for his succor and safty; no truly, *Thy servant did meditate in thy law.*

2. *Possess thy heart with an actual consideration, and a holy dread of the glorious presence of the Almighty*, who sees and pondereth all thy paths, and therefore wil take an account, and that strictly, of all the outstrainings of thy thoughts when thou comest to give attendance upon him, and to draw neer into his presence, in some peculiar

liar and ſpiritual Service: There is a kind of heedleſs wantonneſs which like a Canker breeds in our Atheiſtical diſpoſitions, whereby we ſee not the Rule that ſhould guide us, we lay aſide alſo the conſideration of that power that doth rule us, and wil bring us to judgment, and ſo miſſing the guide that ſhould ſhew us the path, and the power that ſhould awe us, and conſtrain us to keep the rode, a mans mind powrs out it ſelf to every vanity that next offers it ſelf unto its view. Whereas were we aware of his preſence, and awed with it, it would cauſe us to eye him, and attend him in his way and work, wherein he commands us to walk with him. As it is with trewantly Schollers who are ſporting and gaming out of their place, and from any ſerious attendance upon their books, when nothing wil ſtil them, and force them to their ſtudies. as ſoon as ever there is but the leaſt inkling of the Maſter, or any eye they can caſt upon his approach, they are all as ſtil as may be, repair pre ently to their place, fal cloſe, and ſet their minds to their work; O Maſter, Maſter, our Maſter is yonder; there follows ſtilneſs and attendance preſently. Our trewantly and wanton minds are of this temper, we are apt to ſtraggle out of our places, or from giving attendance to thoſe ſpecial Services which the Lord cals for at our hands, and to lay out themſelves upon things that are not pertinent, and further than we are awed with the apprehenſion of Gods ſight and preſence, who cals for the dayly attendance of our thoughts when we draw neer unto him, doth ſee and obſerve our careleſneſs, and wil proceed in Judgment, and execute puniſhment upon us for it, it's ſcant poſſible to hold the bent of our thoughts awfully to the buſineſs we have in hand. It was the Curſe which attended *Jonah* when he departed away from the preſence of the Lord, and from following his Command, he followed *lying vanities*, Jonah, 2. 8. And it's the peculiar plague which is appointed in the way of Providence, and the Lords righteous

righteous proceedings to befal al who bestow not their hearts upon him, Eph. 4. 21. *They walk in the vanity of their minds*; and the reason is rendred, *they are strangers from the life of God.* When our thoughts start aside from under the Government of Gods Wisdom, the Rule of Truth and stability, they wander up and down in the waies of error and vanity, and find no end or measure, follow vanity, and become vain, nor can they attain any stability before they return thither. As your vagabond beggars, and vagrant persons in the Country from whence we came, there is no possibility to fasten them to any imployment, or settle them in any place before they come under the eye of Authority, and power of the Magistrate. So fares it with our vagabond and vagrant thoughts; further than they are under the eye of God, and awed with his presence, it's not possible to stop them from the pursuit of vanity, or confine them to setled consideration of that which concerns our duty and comfort. The Rule is one, like it self accompanied with stability and rest; if once we go astray from that, there is neither end nor quiet in error, but restlesness and emptiness. The Sea, while it keeps the Channel, the course is known, and the Marriners can tel how to advantage their passage; but if once it exceeds the banks, no man can tel whither it wil go, or where it wil stay. Our imaginations are like the vast Sea, while we eye the Rule, and are ordered by the Authority of it, we know our compass; but once go off, and we know not whither we shal go, or where we shal stay.

3. *Be watchfully careful to observe the first wandrings and out-strayings of thy thoughts*, how they first go off from the attendance to the work in hand, and look off from the matter, thou settest thy self to meditate in; immediately recal them back, bring them to their task again, and set them about their intended work. If often they fly out and follow fresh occasions that Satan or a mans corruptions shal suggest take them at the first turn

turn and often again settle them upon the service, until at last by constant custom our mind and thoughts wil buckle handsomly to their business, after they be kept in by a daily care; I have heard Hunts-men say when they have young dogs, raw and that hath not been entred nor acquainted with their sport, if a fresh game come in view, or some other unexpected prey crosse them in their way, they forsake the old sent and follow that which is in their eye, but their manner is to beat them off, and cal them away from that, and then to bring them to the place where they left their former pursuit, and there set them to find the sent afresh, until at last being often checked and constantly trayned up they wil take and attend the first game, so here, with our wandring minds which are not trayned up to this work of meditation, if they begin to fly off and follow a new occasion, suffer not thy thoughts to range, but bring your mind back again, and set it upon the former service, and then by thy constant care and Gods blessing thy mind wil fal in sweetly and go away with the work, or as men use to do with some kind of wand that is warped & bent somwhat much one way, they bend it a little, at the first & there hold it. Bend it & hold it, at last it comes fully to the fashion they desire it. So here often bend and hold thy mind bent to the work in hand, *Heb.* 2. 1. *let us give earnest heed to the things wee have heard*; our roving thoughts are like riven vessels, if the parts be not glewed and the breaches brought together again by strong hand, they wil leak out, so here &c.

Hindrance 4.

The fourth Hindrance which is here pretended is their unskilfulness and unhandiness to this service, which many even Conscientious Christians in the bitterness of their souls complain off, as that which wholy disheartens and discourageth them to the work. They say, that light of the truth, and the dictates of their own Conscience doth give in ful evidence and undeniable, that they should attend the duty, & in obedience to Gods Command they set about the work, but at the very entrance

trance they are at an utter loſs, at a period in their own thoughts, at a ſtand within themſelves, and cannot ſtir a foot forward. They want materials one while upon which they ſhould ſpend their thoughts, another while they want skil, after what manner to exerciſe their apprehenſions about it that they might do good on it, In a word their weakneſs they find to be ſo great and the ſervice to be ſo ſtrange and hard to them, that they cannot but conceive it to be impoſſible to them, ever to attain the skil, and to what purpoſe is it to endeavour it if they cannot attain it?

Anſw. I anſwer what need any further argument than thine own words, to conſtrain thee to the duty now diſcovered? *the more unskilful thou art, the more need thou haſt to learn*; the greater the weight and worth of the duty, the greater diligence in reaſon thou ſhouldeſt uſe in giving attendance thereunto. There is neither weakneſs nor want of power, nor skil in God to do thee good, what ever weakneſs, or want thou findeſt in thy ſelf, and if thou need much, as he hath much in his hand ſo he wil give abundantly to ſatisfy thy deſire and to fit thee for the performance; others have attained it, why mayeſt not thou receive it? he hath beſtowed it upon others why mayeſt not thou expect it? *Wiſdom gives ſubtilty to the ſimple, and ſharpnes to the Ideot.* Prov. 1. 4. thy dullneſs and heavineſs ſhould encreaſe thy diligence and and endeavor and not diſcourage thee *when the tool is dull men put to more ſtrength*, Eccleſ. 10. 10. every thing muſt have a beginning, while wee are endeavoring, God is bleſſing, if we never ſet about a work we shal never compaſs it, thou wilt not expect the child ſhould know a trade before he learn it, and art wel content the child ſee ſeaven years over his head, before thou lookeſt to ſee him attain any perfection; And in the greateſt works and where we have leaſt ability, why ſhould we think to attayn any dexterity without long endeavor; and this adds to our encouragement, its the ſeaſon and time

time wherein the Lord hath promised much of his spirit and presence, and therefore we may look for it, *The weak shal be as* David *Zach.* 12. 8. *David* we know was eminent and marvailous dexterous in this service, thou art weak and foolish and feeble, be it so yet thou hast a promise, thou mayest be as *David*; who made *David* so skilful? why the same God lives stil, who is allsufficient and therefore can, who hath promised and therefore wil help thee also.

Use 2. *A word of caution.* *Hence loose company is a deadly enemy and hindrance to the conversion of a sinner.* that which doth exceedingly prejudice the work of Meditation, and so of brokenness of heart, that hinders the work of Conversion for that is the way thereunto. But there is no greater hindrance to be found on Earth to holy Meditation than froathy Company and Companions, while a man is in the croud amongst such wretches there is no possibility in reason that one should search his own heart and examine his own way, take any account by serious consideration what his course hath been or what his condition is, there is little hope of any possibility that ever the word should settle upon the soul or stay with the sinner in the evidence or prevailing power of it, or that the mind or heart of a poor creature should settle upon that, suck out the sap and virtue of it and continu under the stroke and authority of it while he continues with such varlets, which like the greedy fowl of the ayr, pick out the seed of the word out of the minds of such with whom they do converse, and stop the passage as it were with their prejudices they cast against man and message, that they may never attend it, or if yet they talk with it as a passenger, yet never entertain it as an in-dweller to continue with them. And therfore they act the part not of Gods Ministers or such as would be helpers to the spiritual good of others, but the part of Satans factors, when God is pleased to parly with a sinner, and to speak terror to his Conscience out of

of the word that they may be troubled and tumbled and so find rest at the day of Christ. These Quack-salvers send the distressed sinner to sports, pastimes and recreations, and merry Company, that they take up their thoughts and take off their minds from attending to their sins or the truth, that is, take off the Slave that should cure them, spil the Physick that should heal their maladies; thus they ease their terrors for the while that they may increase their torment forever; accursed comforters, or rather they take up the Devils name and Office *Apollyon* destroyers of the souls of men; therefore holy *Peter* gave that advise to these hearers; *Save your selves from this crooked generation*, q. d. your safety and their society cannot stand together, you must not continue with them, if you would have the power and comfort of the word continue with you; and therefore experience evidenceth God so disposeth ever in the dispensation of the work of his Grace either the sinner that is wounded wil shake off his wicked company, or els the counsel of the word and the worke of Gods spirit. Hence that of the Apostle *Eph.* 5. 14. *Stand up from the dead and Christ shal give thee light.* and 2 Cor. 6. 17. *Come out from among them and be yee separate, and then I wil receive you, and walk among you*, God wil not walk with you if you wil walk with the world, there is no coming into communion with Christ, unless we come out there. Christ tells his disciples *John.* 15. 19. *I have chosen you out of the world.*

Exhortation. We here see the way that the Lord hath chalked out before us the means which in mercy and in way of his providence he hath provided & appointed to break our hearts, to bring us to his son and so to life. We are therfore to be exhorted to attend and follow the counsel of the Lord that we may expect and so receive his blessing; even with Consciencious diligence and studious endeavour to press on to the performance of this service. some hapily never knew it, looked not at it as

Use 3.

a labor or task that did appertain to them, let such now own it, and set about it with al their might, others it may be have been convinced of the duty, and have been forward in the practice of it in former times, and forced to it in the daies of their distress, but now are fallen back and grown wearish in their way, those are to be perswaded to proceed on with more chearfulness and speed; he that never knew the work let him now learn it. He that hath set about it in former times let him be for ever quickened and encouraged in it. Joyn al your counsels and resolutions you that are children and servants in the same family, members in the same assemblies, neighbours in the same place and plantation, and cal upon each other to this holy course; *Lam.* 3. 40. *Let us search and try our wayes and turn again unto the Lord.* say so one to another, you that are privy to the wretchedness of your own hearts and lives, we complain and that justly of a giddy slightness of spirit, we meet with many stroks of the word, stirrings and recoylings of spirit, our hearts misgive us, many checks of Conscience, and motives (we think) of the holy Ghost cast into our minds but nothing stayes with us, sticks upon us, they pass away insensibly, and leave no impression, no power behind them we wash away al: we cannot but see and wonder at the unreasonable hardness of our heart, and condemn our selves, who have had so many blows from Gods hand and they break not, so many dreadful threatnings we hear out of the word dayly able to shak the heart of a Divel, we stirr not, we are not affected therewith; our corruptions are hainous for their nature, many for their number, accompanied with direful plagues from the Lord, are daily before our eyes, have driven many to untimely deaths and so to Hel. We cannot but acknowledg al this and yet we be not touched with any saving remorse for them we have had al helps, and the Lord hath tried al conclusions upon us, and yet al in vain. Who knows but we have

have been negligent in this ordinance, and therefore God hath curſed al others, we have not uſed this means as wel as others, and therefore we have got beneſit by none, who knowes but the want of this hath hindred the ſucceſs of al other that we have had and uſed in our times and places, Oh then recover our former careleſneſs, ſend our thoughts afar off and ſurvey our former converſations, let us ſearch and conſider our own wayes who knows but the Lord may turn our hearts to him? Let us queſtion our own ſouls and ſay to our ſelves what have we done? that it may be beyond queſtion that God hath humbled, pardoned and accepted of us. What is the reaſon that one ſinks under the ſin that another never feels? It is with our ſins as with our burdens he that ſees a weight and it may be lifts at it, but if he never lay it upon his ſhoulder, or if it be layed, he never keeps it there but caſts it off immediately, he wil never be touched or troubled with it, which another dies under as not able to endure, ſo it is here our ſins and iniquities are a burden too heavy for any man to bear and not to break under them and they who are forced to feel the Leaſt of them are compelled to confeſs as much; as the Devils and damned in Hel, the wicked in horror of Conſcience *my puniſhment is greater than can be endured.* Others whom God abares of the execution of his diſpleaſure for the preſent, theſe men look at them, and may lift at them a little by ſome ſudden flaſhy and flitting apprehenſion, as they hear or read &c. But by Meditation to bind this burden upon their Conſciences, that the heart cannot get from under it, they are not able to abide the weight of them, therefore wil not abide the thought of them; they fling off, and caſt away the burden, and ſo they never feel it, before the infinite Juſtice of the Lord ſeizeth upon their ſouls by everlaſting diſcouragement. Better we ſet them in order before our eye & trouble our hearts with them than that the Lord ſhould ſet them in order before us at the day of Judgment, and

tear us in pieces when there shal be none to deliver us.

To help in this so hard a buisiness, let me speak something.

1. *By way of provocation to stir you up to this work.*
2. *By way of direction to guid you in it.*

I. To provoke your hearts thereunto take these considerations.

1. *Let every man take it to himself as his own task, charge it upon his own soul, as a service which by unavoydable necessity, lyes upon him which he may not neglect.* This wil awaken the soul to the work, say, it's my debt and I must pay it. It's my duty appertaining to me, and required at my hand, and I must discharge it: as I wil answer it at my peril at the day off accounts. Our lazy hearts if they can find any dispensation or exception they wil slip the collar and put off the performance, cal therefore upon thy self as sometimes they upon *Ezra*, *Arise* thou sluggish and sloathful soul, *the matter belongs unto thee*, to me? you'l say, thats a likely matter indeed, I am a silly mayd, an ignorant youth, or an aged and decrepit creature, my memory and judgment worn out, I pray you have me excused, my place my ability suits not, my times and leasure in the multitude of so many occasions permit not, such and such who have abilities can, such who have leisure & opportunity may, such who have dexterity & skil in such performances, should indeed both own the duty & perform it but alas my place and abilites suit not, my time and leasure in the multitude of so many occasions permit not, therefore it cannot belong to me, yes to young ones and ignorant ones, it appertains to you, doth it not appertain to you to be Humbled, and to turn your feet to the testimonies of the Almighty? doth it not appertain to you to be blessed and to have your wayes made prosperous in which you walk? If you would come to Gods end you must attend Gods way, If you would attain a blessing and success from God

God, you must use the means appointed by him for good go your waies you poor creatures, commune with your own hearts, and set down this for an everlasting conclusion, Come, we can tel how to muse and plot about the pleasures of a sinful course, how we may commit them: Oh it appertains to us to meditate of the danger of our wicked waies, how we may reform them, and avoid it; we can tel how to muse upon the wayward perverseness of our own Spirits, that we may break the righteous Laws of God; let us consider the evil of our waies that we may turn our feet unto his Testimonies.

2. *Consider how much you run in Arrearages, and how far you are cast behind hand in this Spiritual Service*; how unacquainted with it in former times, and how negligent since you have known the way, and therefore so much more need you have to double your diligence, and to recover your former carelessness with more studious and conscientious endeavor to your utmost. He that hath much work, and little time, hath reason to be exceeding laborious: he that hath a long journey, and sets out late, had need to make hast: he that hath many ancient reckonings almost past remembrance, he must resolve to sit at it, and that it cost him the setting on to make any through accounts, when thou art to cal over the folly of thy Child-hood, the vanity of thy youth, the rebellion of thy riper yeers, to search into the sinful distempers of thy heart, which thou hast long harbored, and thy miscarriages worn out of mind and remembrance, it wil cause thee to sit at it night and day, and to bring in those bils, and to read them over, it's almost impossible for thy life, and therefore thou must labor hard, *Zach.* 12. 10, 11, 12 *When the Lord shall powr out the spirit of Grace and supplication upon the Jews, they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn apart, the Wives apart, and the Husbands apart, &c.*

3. *Consider what need thou hast of this holy Ordinance*, that

that wil compel thee to prize it, and to uſe it alſo; it's that which wil yield ſome ſupply in moſt of all thy Spiritual wants, lend a hand of ſupport in moſt of thy feebleneſſes, which may befal, and would hinder thee in a Chriſtian way, thy memory is weak; thou doſt attend the holy Word of God, and many times cloſe with the wholſom and precious comforts, but alas they are gone and ſlip away: Meditation wil ſtrengthen thy feeble memory, and though theſe bleſſed Truths would depart, yet it wil ſtay them and retain them with thee. *Joſ.* 1. 8. *The words of this book ſhall not depart away from thee*; how ſhal we prevent that? *Thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night.* Thy apprehenſions are ſhallow, and thou narrow in thy conceiving; Meditation wil ripen and enlarge thy judgment, ſo that thou ſhalt exceed the moſt judicious and learned, *Pſal.* 119. 99. *I have more underſtanding than all my teachers*; how came that about? *For thy Teſtimonies are my Meditation.* Thou art ſimple and imprudent in thy way, not able to diſcover or prevent the over reachings of ſuch as be wily and cunning in their contrivements; Meditation wil ſharpen thy apprehenſions, and make thee able to diſcern the ſecret conveyances and ſlights of the falſhearted, and to prevent the danger of them; *Pſal.* 119. 98. *I became wiſer than mine Enemies, becauſe thy Commandements were ever with me*, and that was by Meditation: Thy Spirit is ſluggiſh and weariſh, thou wanteſt life and mettal in the diſcharge of thy duty, prayeſt without ſence, and confeſſeſt without ſorrow, begs mercy, and doſt not affect it; Meditation will quicken thee in Conference, make thee apt and ready to all undertakings, ſtore thee with matter, fraught thy apprehenſions and tongue, warm thy affections, and make thee go with readineſs to the work; Meditation adds as it were, wind to a mans Sails, and wings to a mans endeavor, *While I was muſing, my heart burned, then ſpake I with my tongue*, Pſal. 39. 2, 3. If then thy memory

mory be weak, and thou needeſt that that would ſtrengthen it; thy apprehenſion narrow and dul, thou need'ſt that that would enlarge it; thy ſpirit dul and ſluggiſh, and thou needeſt that that may add quickening vertue thereunto, a ful ſtream that may turn the wheel; behold Meditation is the Medicine, it hath *a Probatum eſt* upon it, approved of al the Saints, and the Cure left upon Record. Thy needs are great and manifold; ſo do thou prize this means, and uſe it for thy good.

4. *Conſider the Soveraign Vertue of this Spiritual Service, and ſpecial Ordinance of God,* as that which ſucks out the ſap and ſweet of al other Diſpenſations of God, and means of Grace, wherein he diſcovers himſelf to us, ſo that though they be good in themſelves, yet the good of them is not received but by meditation: As it is in the body naturally, be it that thy meat is choyce that is provided, the dreſſing neat and wholſom, the appetite ſtrong and ſharp, and that a man feeds liberally and heartily of ſuch dainties ſet before him, though theſe proviſions be never ſo ſavory and Cordial, and able to refreſh and ſtrengthen, yet al labor is loſt, and meat loſt alſo, if his digeſtion be naught, Nature is loaded and burdened, but never nouriſhed thereby. So it is in the ſoul, be the means of Grace never ſo powerful and precious, ſappy and Spiritual, Opportunities great to enjoy them, liberties and deſires ready to attend them, to hear, and read, and confer, receive the Seals, &c. Theſe are excellent, and of ſpecial uſe in themſelves, but unleſs by Meditation we digeſt this food, the head and heart may be loaded, but little ſpiritual knowledg or power with a ſpiritual bleſſing wil be reaped therefrom. Joſh. 1. 8. *Thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night; then ſhalt thou make thy way proſperous; then ſhalt thou have good ſucceſs*: would'ſt thou have the Word that is preached, and the adminiſtration of the Seals ſavory and ſeaſonable, admonitions proſperous, when they are diſpenſed to thy ſoul? to what purpoſe elſe have

have we them, and enjoy them? if not prospered, they are certainly accursed; that is the scope of all Ordinances, the end and good of al Church Liberties and Priviledges: Would'st thou be sure when thou goest to the Congregation, thou shalt have good success in hearing, thou shalt be quickened, good success in receiving, thou shalt be strengthened in assurance of eternal life? When thou fallest to Meditating, then, *then* I say, expect the Lord wil make al prosperous and successful to thy soul; and before that time the Lord doth not promise thee either blessing or success, nor canst thou expect it, nor art thou like to receive any. Our Profession in the Church, is like the Trade we drive in Christianity, and Meditation it is that brings in al the profit and gain, wherein the life and comfort of al Performances and Ordinances do consist. And that wherein the upshot of al our desires are brought in. The reproof was sharp and seasonable, met with thy corruption, and touched thy heart in a special manner, and thou sayest, I pray God we may profit by it. The Examination and Tryal, was narrow and straight, came indeed to the quick, drave me to stagger and stand; our Liberties and Priviledges are precious we enjoy in *New-England*, I pray God we may profit by them; so say I, I pray God thou mayest. But if thy heart be with thy prayer, I would only advise thee the way to obtain what thou desirest. That of *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1. Tim. 4. 15, 16. *Meditate upon these things, and be in them*, and thou shalt profit, *and thy profiting will appear to all.* The wicked wil be forced to see it, and wonder at it; the Saints wil see it, and rejoyce in it; it wil appear to thine own heart, and thou mayest be comforted in it.

These be Motives to provoke thee, and compel thee to pay thy debt honestly: Thou art marvelous behind hand; thine own ease should draw thee now to pursue it; thou hast most need, and necessity should force thee to

to attend it; the blessing goes along with it, and that should perswade thee to be glad to continue in it.

The Second Particular propounded, is how to direct you herein; and here, this ART of *Meditation* is that which hath exercised the Pens of many, and the Thoughts of more; and the desires of men are not herein yet satisfied, who find it most hard to practice, and yet more than ordinarily difficult to know what they should practice: I shal suddenly lay forth the compass of it so far as concerns the occasion in hand. 2. *Directions for Meditation.*

The Meditation of our sins, so far as may be serviceable to set forward the work of Contrition, hath two Parts:

1. *Following the enquiry of the Nature of corruption.*
   - *The Rule to Authorize to the Work.*
   - *Manner how to proceed in the Work,*
     - *Survey the particulars severally.*
     - *Sum them up joyntly, see the value of them.*
2. *Fastening of it upon the Soul.*

That we may follow the footsteps of a corruption, and track a distemper to the full, we must have our COMMISSION *that must Authorize us, and carry us on in our Course.* And here the Direction is this:

We must go out to this Work of Meditation in the vertue of an Ordinance, and so of Commission from God: We must attend a Word that must guide us in it, and look to Christ and his Promise, and set our Grace a-work, that *by the power of his might*, and the help of his Grace, we may both be enabled and preserved in the ser- *Direct.* 1

vice; for such is the ticklishness of our corrupt hearts, and the infecting and tainting Nature of sin, that it's hard to meddle with it, but some pollution will cleave unto us by it. And it is that which the Saints, and those most sincere, have found by experience, and in much bitterness have complained of, that when they have set themselves about this work by Meditation of their sin, their hearts have suddenly been carried aside with it, and tainted with a kind of delight in it, when they intended to loath and abhor themselves in the Consideration thereof. Thus by the abuse of this Duty, we come to be moulded and melted into the temper of sin by Meditation, when we intended to be burdened with it. The error and mistake is here; We do not bring the Authority of the Word, and Power of Christ, and help of his Grace against sin, which would both discover and subdue it: But we bring the Temptation, and occasion, and our corrupt hearts together, they soder and suit one with another, like tinder to the sparks, it encreaseth the fire, not quencheth it, provokes a corruption, not kils it. This is to make a brabble with a mans lust, when out of our own strength we enter into a contestation with our distemper; we act under the Covenant of Works, by an irritating power we add to the strength and dominion of sin. Whereas did we go against it in the Covenant of Grace, we should destroy the dominion of it, *Rom.* 6. 14. *Sin shall not have dominion over you, because you are not under the Law, but under Grace.* Thus if a man have Grace. But if it be in the way of seeking and receiving Grace, then attend the Word, and in the Authority and Commission from thence received, be carried on: Go against thy Corruption in the vertue and power of the Word, not in any power of thine own: As Constables, though mean, yet they use the Kings Name.

2. *For the Manner of our Proceeding, to make a full Enquiry into the several Passages of a sinful*

Dis-

Diſtemper, the Directions are Three:

First, *Look at the Root and riſe of a ſinful practice, whence it ſprings, inwardly,* otherwiſe we ſhall never come to the core of a Corruption, or ſee where the loathſomneſs of a luſt lies. The ſting of the Serpent is ſmal, and the skin pleaſing, but the poyſon is ſpreading and deadly. Beware that there be not *a root of bitterneſs,* Heb. 12. 15. Thus our Savior he leads his Diſciples to the right diſcovery of their carriage when they asked whether they might not imitate the practice of Elias, *to call for fire down from Heaven upon the heads of the Samaritans,* becauſe of their unkind dealing, *Luke,* 9. 54. Did one look but at the out-ſide of the expreſſion, the pattern they propound, and the pretence they made, there would no great matter of diſcovery appear; therefore our Savior leads them inward, ſaies he, *You know not what ſpirits you are of.* The voyce is the voyce of *Jacob*; your pretence is fair, as *Elias* his zeal was good; but you have not the ſpirit of *Elias,* not the love of God, but the love of your ſelves, even the ſpirit of ſelf-love and pride, &c. there is little exception that can be taken from any thing that appears outwardly, their Impoſthumed matter lay within. The ſpirit of ſin is in the ſpirit of a mans practice; may be it's but a ſhort and ſnappiſh ſpeech, a wayward carriage in a ſilent manner, and ſullenneſs, thou goeſt away, and ſayeſt nothing. But from what ſpirit came this? From thy heart in hideous diſdain and contempt, with fierceneſs of hatred, as though it had been a fiend of Heil, look to thy ſpirit. 1.

When thou haſt known the womb of wickedneſs, where the active power of a corruption lay, and whence it came, *Look ſecondly to the conception and breeding of ſin, how the frame and conſtitution of a corruption comes to be faſhioned inwardly, before it be brought forth into practice.* James, 1. 15. *Luſt when it hath conceived, bringeth forth ſin*: Sometimes a man con- 2.

ceives and travels of a monstrous Birth, of an abominable and hideous villany, and yet no man can so judg it before it appear in the ful birth, and so the compleat constitution thereof. This conception of a lust appears in the concurrence and combination of a corrupt heart, and carnal reason. 1. The affections pursue eagerly the evil, and the wil resolves peremptorily, this lust I must satisfie, this sinful way I wil walk in. 2. Carnal reasonings are like the formative force, or like the Spirit in the seed; it casts about by al cunning contrivements, subtil devices, to compass and bring it about, and to cover and color it over with the fairest pretence they may: But when the parts and proportions of a perverse carriage, the framing of our loathsom lusts come to view, they then appear direful and dreadful. That *David* should send for *Uriah*, entertain him kindly, tender him and his comfort, so as to send him to enjoy his own comfort at his own house, that he should advance him to that respect, and put that honor and trust upon him, as to put him into the Fore-front of the Battel, who can blame any thing? But to do al this to cover his Adultery, and at last to suck the blood of the innocent that he may enjoy his lust, here is a hellish brood, a monstrous birth: So it was with *Absolons* fair language, &c. To this place appertain al those rebellious oppositions which make head against al Rule and Reason; when the light of knowledg would gainsay, motions of the Spirit perswade and forewarn, do it not; checks of Conscience controul; yet against knowledg and conscience, and the motions of the Spirit, they break through, and pursue their lusts; the light of knowledg carnal reason darkens, the motions of the Spirit they quench, the checks of conscience they stifle. So it is in the perverse carriage of rebellious Servants, &c.

3. *Follow sin by the fruits of it, as by the bloody foot-steps, and see what havock it makes in every place, where ever it comes*: go to the prisons, and see so many Malefactors

lefactors in Irons, ſo many Witches in the Dungeon; theſe are the fruits of ſin; look aſide, and there you ſhal ſee one drawn out of the pit where he was drowned; caſt your eye but hard by, and behold another lying weltring in his blood, the knife in his Throat, and his hand at the knife, and his own hands become his Executioner; thence go to the place of Execution, and there you ſhal hear many prodigal and rebellious children and ſervants upon the Ladder, leaving the laſt remembrance of their untimely death, which their diſtempers have brought about. I was born in a good place where the Goſpel was preached with plainneſs and power, lived under Godly Maſters, and Religious Parents; a holy and tender-hearted Mother I had, many prayers ſhe made, tears ſhe wept for me, and thoſe have met me often in the dark in my diſſolute courſes, but I never had a heart to hear and receive. All you ſtubborn and rebellious, hear and fear, and learn by my harms; haſten from thence into the Wilderneſs, and ſee *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* going down quick to Hell, and al the people fly ing and cry ing leſt we periſh alſo; Lo, this rebellion hath brought: Turn aſide but to the red Sea, and behold al the Egyptians dead upon the ſhore; and ask who ſlew them? and the ſtory wil tel you a ſtubborn heart was the cauſe of that direful confuſion: From thence ſend your thoughts to the Croſs where our Savior was crucified, he who bears up Heaven and Earth with his Power, and behold thoſe bitter and briniſh tears, and hideous cries, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And make but a peep-hole into Hel, and lay your ear and liſten to thoſe yellings of the Devils and damned, curſing the day that ever they were born, the means that ever they enjoyed, the mercies that ever they did receive, the worm there gnawing, and never dies, the fire there burning, and never goes out, and know this ſin hath done, and it wil do ſo to al that love it, and live in it. Say thou therefore, and why not I amongſt

amongst the Witches upon the place of Execution, with Malefactors? why not I in Hel with the Devils? Since my sins are as theirs, my plagues might have been, and in the issue wil be as theirs, unless I repent.

Direful are those plagues that sin brings upon the sinner; but these are not the worst, nay in truth, the least part of that evil that sin procures, and puls upon the souls of those who give themselves thereunto. Here is the venom of the vengeance, and the dregs and malignity of that mischief that accompanies it, in those spiritual desolations and ruines it leaves upon the soul, those not to be conceived, much less uttered by the tongues of Men and Angels. Let us look inward, and dig deeper.

1. *Commission of sin makes a man senceless and remorseless in it, puts a man beyond the consideration and thought of amendment*, either capability of good or to look after it; it takes off endeavor, nay desire, and thought of recovery out of our wretchedness: such were they of whom the Apostle speaks, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. *Having their consciences seared with a hot Iron*; as it is with seared parts, what ever gashes or stabs come, they have no sence or feeling of them; what ever judgments are denounced, threatnings proclaimed in a mans ears, executed before a mans eyes, the seared conscience is stupid and fearless, it feels nothing, is affected with nothing. So it was said of the Heathen, *Eph.* 4. 19. *They were past feeling*; God frowns from Heaven, the Word threatens, Devils accuse, their own Judgments condemn the loathsomness of their practice, and men bear witness, and cry shame of the sottishness of their course, their distempers are such that they stink above ground, and yet they poor creatures feel nothing, but bless themselves in their present condition; *Rom.* 2. 5. *They have hearts that cannot repent, heaping up wrath against the day of wrath.*

The

The daily and ordinary commission of any one sin, delivers up the sinner to become a prey to the power of al corruptions even the most detestable; sin lays waste the soul that it becomes a through-fair, and lyes open to the most hellish provocations or distempers that can be presented before it and nothing comes amiss, thats the inference when the heathen had no delight *to have God in their knowledg*, had notliking to such and such righteous and good wayes of God, *he delivered them up to a reprobate sence*, Rom. 1. 28. they had no delight to be ruled by the truth, and the wisdom and holiness thereof, no delight to know or relish any good; God takes them at their word, and leaves them in the hands of their sins, they should have minds that should never know the truth, hearts that should never approve of it. See presently when the soul is thus layed waste what a drove and inroad of hideous abominations come in, and take possession, and make a prey and spoyl of the poor wretched creature as they wil, then ver. 29. 30. *they are ful of all Unrighteousness, Covetousness, Fornication, Envy, proud Boasters, heady, high minded, Covenant breakers, False, Unfaithful, Disobedient, Unnatural*, nothing is a miss what ever the heart of *Belzebub*, or the bottom of Hel can harbour, It's the ground of the coherence of that place also *Eph.* 4. 19. *Who being past feeling, they have given up themselves to work al uncleanness with greediness*; the poor creature is at the devotion and beck of any base abomination; no temptation presseth in, but prevayles, no allurement is presented but it surpriseth and taketh aside, no corruption stirs but it carryes and acts him without gainsaying; the Devil and his distempers take him alive and take him at their pleasures, lead him as they list; and he knows not where he is before he be in the bottomless pit; This is the quintessence of vengeance an unseen evil; but in truth unconceavable, the terrors of death and the torments of hell are nothing in comparison of this. When the 2.

the glorious and blessed God through the just desert of sin leaves the creature, at the lust of Satan and his distemper, *Loe he is in your hands do what you wil with him*, I wil have nothing to do with him more this is the sentence passed upon the backslider *Prov.* 14. 14. *the backslider in heart shal be filled with his own wayes*, he shal have his belly ful. Thus as the saints are *sealed up in the day of Redemption* the wicked are sealed up under the soverainty of their sins unto the day of destruction, thou wouldest have thy pride and stubbornness & falsness, be thou for ever proud and for ever stubborn, and for ever false-hearted, continu so and perish so. There is no judgment like to this and this is the fruit of sin, and that which the Lord reserves as the choyceſt of al his plagues the last and worst 1 *Prov.* 26. 28. 31. *Yee shall call, but I wil not hear; yee shall seek me, and shall not find me*, one would think this is heavy and harder measure could hardly be found, yes the Lord hath worse *because ye despised my counsel and set at naught al my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own wayes and be ful of their own devices*, they who frame and devise devises to contrive Contentments to their own carnal and corrupt nature, carry a forge of falshood and lying about them, to succeed in these one would have thought is the greatest content such a person could take; true it is so, and that is the greatest and most dreadful plague that could befal them. When the Lord Christ takes away al of himself and his spirit from the creature, and leaves him wholly to himself and the power of Satan, & his own loathsom distempers, nothing of Gods wisdom but their own folly shal mislead them, nothing of Gods holiness but the perverse rebellion of their own hearts shal rule them and so destroy them. this is to be in hell before he come there, and so be a Devil before he come among them.

3. *They come to be helpless in regard of all means, that the Lord hath provided, or the mercies that the Lord hath*

hath offered unto them, and doth yet ſtrive with them in, Its ſin that ſtops the entercourſe between God and the ſoul, his ordinances and our Conſciences, takes and intercepts the paſſage, that the power of the means never work upon us, the ſweetneſs of his mercies never affect us, the virtue of his ordinances find no place, leave no impreſſion upon the ſoul; This is the fruit which the prophet layes forth of the rebellions and ſtubbornneſs of the Jewes, which made them ripe for everlaſting ruine, *Iſa.* 6. 9. 10. *Make the heart of this people fatt, and their ears heavy*, and by that time they are ſure enough for ever ſeeing the face of God, or receiving benefit by any means; *ſeeing they may ſee and not perceive, hearing they may hear and not underſtand, leaſt they be converted.* They are far enough from converſion and ſo from ſalvation, Its that alſo which is of neceſſity implyed in the former expreſſion; *they ſhall be filled with their own deviſes*, ſo there is no entrance, no acceptance of any direction from the wil and word of God. As it is in veſſels that are brim ful of liquor ready to run over, there is no room for a ſpoonful of the moſt precious liquor to be put into them. So through the juſt deſert of their ſin they are ſo fully poſſeſſed with the power of their corruptions which have had commiſſion to rule them, that as our ſaviour ſais *John* 8. 37. *There is no place for the word.* Their minds ſo ful of pride of their own carnal reaſon, that there is no room for inſtruction to direct or inform them, their hearts ſo ful of ſtifneſs and perverſneſs, that there is no place for reproof that may prevail with them and reform them, their ſpirit ſo ful of falſneſs and ready to take hold upon deceit, that there is no place for the plainneſs of the truth to frame them to the ſimplicity and ſingleneſs of carriage as ſuits with Gods mind; ſo that all means of grace and ordinances take their leave of the ſinner, work no more upon that heart that hath ſo long and ſo often oppoſed the work thereof *Jer.* 51. 9. *We would have healed Babilon, but ſhe*

would not be healed, leave her then leave instructions, and leave exhorting &c. so it is with the ordinances the Lord passeth by and wil not so much as speak a word to a rebellious heart, the threatnings that troubled before, now stir not; the instructions that convinced before now awe not at al; the reproofs and exhortations that awakened and affected the heart, now slide away like water upon a rock, and there is no print or the least appearance of any impression left behind; the ruine of mens comforts, lives and liberties which sin hath brought are open, but oh the woful desolation of souls could it be seen of al, as it is felt of some whose heart God toucheth it would make sin exceeding sinful and unsupportably evil, as they in the Prophet complayned bitterly, *Why are our hearts hardened from thy fear?* Isa. 63. 17.

4. Besides this bitter fruit which the sinner is forced to tast of sin in his own particular, *view wee the extent of that evil which sin doth unto others*; and that partly which is common to every corruption of what ever kind or degree, it is of great or smal, open or secret, whether more loathsom and notorious to the eyes of men, or that which is esteemed less in the account of the world, that which is an ingredient into the nature and constitution and making up of every corruption that it makes a breach upon the righteous law of God *i. e.* not onely shaks of the rule and soveraignty of the law, but preferrs in truth the supremacie of our lusts, before the authority of the Lord himself which he hath and ought to exercise over our souls. For the sinner in the practice of any sin proclaims this unto the world, its not the royalty of the righteous law of God but mine own distemper shal rule me: not his wil but mine own wayward corruption shal cast the ballance; Its not the wisdom of the word but my folly, and the vanity of my ignorant mind shal lead me in what I do; Its not the goodness of the Law of Gods holiness but the pleasing corruptions

corruptions of mine own carnal heart shal content me; in a word, each man professeth God shal not be his God but he sets up his lust in his room and doth homage thereunto; than which what greater indignity can be done to the Almighty? Al men look at it as a most hellish expression of the *Jews*, *not him but* Barabbas. *Barabbas* was a murtherer vile and base, yet a man, and therefore somthing of God in him, but more hideous is the hateful blasphemy which the practice of every sinner proclaymes *not God but sin*; he advanceth sin in his choyce which is nothing but baseness it self, above the infinite holiness of the only blessed God, so their profession was, *they said to the Almighty depart away from us we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, thou saiest in thy heart as much, when in the secret resolution of thy soul thou baddest humility depart the pride of thine own heart should carry thee; to meekness depart, so to the God of Grace and holiness depart, the knotty stoutness of thine own spirit was the Liege Lord thou yieldest homage and obedience unto. Out of mens Atheism and ignorance this is not thought on, and therefore men thinke their sins little, nor are they apprehensive of that infinite wrong that they do to the holy and infinite Majesty of the blessed God.

Besides this wrong that is common to al sins, *there be some especially open and scandalous that become out of measure sinful.*

Committed against many mercies, against many means; against many mercies wherwith God hath wooed and allured them, that he might have overcome their unkind hearts, wth his tender compassions, had they but a spark of any good nature or ingenuity within them. Thus they sin against more of God, & therfore their sin becoms unmeasurably sinful against the bowels of a Father that hath yerned towards them: the blood of a Christ that hath been shed for them; the tears of a saviour that have been wept over them, *Oh that thou hadst known in this* 1.

thy day; the consolation and intimations of the spirit who hath striven and entreated, Oh do not do so and sin against God, and yet impudently, presumptuously and pertinaciously thou wouldest break through al these armyes of compassions, to commit that sin that wil be thy ruine, how vile thy carriage and how just thy plague. Thus *Nathan* pleads with *David* when he would lay open the loathsomness of his evil before him, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7. 8. 9. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel I annoynted thee King over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of* Saul, *and I gave thee thy masters house and thy masters wives into thy bosome, and gave thee the house of Israel and the house of Judah, and if that had been too little I would moreover have given thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the command of the Lord?* The heart of the holy man sunk down in sorrow, *I have sinned.* Yea these coals of fire if gathered and heaped up I mean these compassions rightly considered and weighed, and layd upon the heart they are able almost to melt the most flinty disposition, *Jud.* 2. 1. 2. 3. So the Angel overbore the rebellious spirits of the *Israelites*, *I made you to go up out of Egipt and have brought you into the land which I sware unto your Fathers, and I said I will never break my Covenant with you, and ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land, you shal throw down their altars, but ye have not obeyed my voyce why have ye done this? and it came to pass when he spake these words unto al the Children of Israel that the people lift up their voyces and wept.* This brake their hearts al in pieces, though perverse and rebellious, they ceased answering and fel to weeping, their tears and mourning were instead of words they would return in their defence.

2. *Against many means wherwith the Lord hath striven with us to stop us in the pursuit of sin, and to reclame us from our miscarriages*; God hems in a poor creature on every side by publick dispensations and private

private counſels by ordinary and extraordinary helps, way-layes a ſinner *and hedgeth up his path with thorns, and builds a wal about him that he might find the ways of ungodlyneſs no more* Hoſ 2. 8. He that adventures upon the commiſſion of ſin againſt ſuch means, and breaks through ſuch armyes of ordinances, there is a multiplication of many ſins in the commiſſion of one, becauſe it is againſt the multiplication of many truths, or one truth in a manifold diſpenſation, he ſins againſt ſo many inſtructions, ſo many comforts, ſo many counſels he hath heard. Confeſſions he hath made, and prayers he hath put up for himſelf, and others have made in his behalf; every one of theſe diſpenſations hath an action againſt the ſoul becauſe it hath been wronged by the ſinner; *John.* 12. 48. *He that heareth and rejecteth hath one that judgeth, even that word that I have ſpoken and he hath heard wil judg him*: ſaith our Saviour Chriſt. Thoſe reproofs that thou haſt heard and not ſubmitted to, Inſtructions that thou haſt heard and not embraced thou ſhalt need no other judg, thoſe wil judg thee, and how heavy wil that judgment be then, *John*, 15. 22. *If I had not come, they had had no ſin, but now they have no cloak for their ſin.*

Wrong to our brethren their honor, and lives, goods and good names, eſpecially when open and ſcandalous, wee ſin againſt the ſouls of our brethren, lay ſtumbling blocks before them, and here one ſin may become many millions of offences, as the numbers may be many that ſhal hear of it. Who knows how others may be emboldned and encouraged in ſin by our example? how others hindred, and provoked to ſpeak evil of the good ways, of Gods grace becauſe of our wretchedneſs? *Woe be to the World becauſe of offences*, Mat. 18. 7. Who knows but the blood of many who periſh by our means may be required at our hand? may that our ſinful example may live when we are dead, 2 *Sam* 12. 14. *By this deed thou haſt given great occaſion to the enemies of the Lord* 3.

to

to blaſpheme, Rom. 2. 24. *the name of God is blaſphemed amongſt the heathen through you*, and therefore the Prophet *David* though God hath pardoned his ſin, and publiſhed it by *Nathan*, he would not pardon himſelf, but left his repentance upon record as wel as his fal, *Peter went out and wept bitterly* that others might hear of his ſorrow and humiliation for his ſin who had heard of his backſliding. Many wil ly and curſe with *Peter*, but he that hath his Grace wil go out with *Peter* and mourn bitterly. Many can eaſily fal into filthineſs as *David*, but if he have his ſpirit he wil labour to have his heart and bones broken with *David*.

4. Add unto al the former *the time wherein a man hath continued in his ſins and the frequency of them*, having often committed one and the ſame ſin, ſtumbling again at the ſame ſtone, & taken aſide again by the ſame ſnares and temptations after they have been confeſſed; bewailed, reſolved againſt *Pſal.* 78. 32. *For all this they ſined ſtil &c.* Pſal. 40. 12. *they are more than the haires of my head, I am not able to look up*, Thus wee muſt ſurvey ſeverally the particulars which may be able to preſent the vileneſs of ſin to us, but that is not al nor yet ſufficient. but,

2. *We muſt ſum them up joyntly by ſerious meditation, that ſo they may fal upon the heart in the ful weight of them, and prevail more effectually and this alſo helps forward the work of contrition in a ſpecial manner*, He that parts every ſtick in the bundle and takes them ſeverally and ſingles them one from another he may carry them eaſily and lightly, never be loaded or troubled with them, but when he hath gathered them from ſeveral places where they lay ſcattered, and bundled them together, he wil then find them a burden he is not able to lift, much leſs able to ſtand under and bear; ſo here that is alſo another and ſpecial work of Meditation, beſides thoſe mentioned formerly, it doth not onely look over the ſeveral aberrations of mans practice, and gather

gather up our particular miſcarriages ſcattered up and down in our dayly courſe, but laies and bundles them all together, and ſo they become a burden unſupportable. that ſeems to be one part of the meaning of the place, *Pſal.* 38. 4. *My ſins are paſſed over my head, and are become too heavy for me to bear.* It's a compariſon (ſay Interpreters, and thoſe very judicious) taken from Waters; that look as the Land-floods when the waters flow in from every Riveret and Gutter, and from every Hill and Furrough; at laſt they meet all in the main Channel, and ſo becomes an overbearing ſtream that ſwels above the Banks, and bears down all before it; whereas each petty Gutter was ſuch as any might wade through, and ſtep over; the might of the Flood none can withſtand: So it is here with Meditation, it doth not only ſearch the ſeveral aberrations and goings aſide in the ſeveral occaſions of our life, which when they are ſingled one from another ſeem very ſmal; yet when our ſeveral diſtempers, and dayly ſwervings become like the drops of rain, not falling forty daies and forty nights, but may be ſo many months or yeers of continued provocations; the great depths of the corruption of our Nature, are ſet open, and our ſins like the Waters of the Sea gathered together by ſad muſing, paſs over our heads, and are paſt our ſtrength to bear them, and without ſpecial ſupporting mercy would ſink us into everlaſting diſcouragement. As it is with a Bankrupt arreſted, ſome petty debts or ſmal bils that are charged upon him, he might eaſily anſwer, and be able without any great difficulty to diſcharge; but when al his Bils are brought in from each Creditor, and his Books ſummed up, the *Summa totalis*, amounts to ſo much that it ſinks his eſtate, and breaks his back utterly. So here, a ſlighty apprehenſion of ſuch and ſuch ſlips, or ſome circumſtances of our miſcarriages, look over them ſeverally, they ſeem but little in themſelves; but laid together, and taken in the

the ful Sum unto which they amount, the guilt and filth of them wil appear inconceivable and unsupportable, that the sinner wil never be able to answer, or to bear.

It is the mind and intendment of the Spirit, the meaning, yea, the proper meaning of that word, *Mark*, 14 last, when *he had thought of his sins*, saies our Translation; when he had cast all the particular and heightning circumstances together, as the word properly signifies; when he had summed up his several miscarriages by a serious Meditation, then his heart breaketh within him, though the Cock had crowed, and our Savior had looked upon him, and he remembred at a sudden push of apprehension his evil, yet he stood it; but when he had laid al together, cast up the *Summa totalis* of his fearful departures from the Lord, by denying, falsefying, cursing, with al the aggravating circumstances, that he that was not only a Christian, but entertained as a Servant, yea called to be an Apostle, who was so seasonably, and with such earnestness forewarned of his backsliding and false dealing, who had promised and resolved with such courage against it, that he should not only forsake his Master in a covert manner, but openly and shamefully renounce him, yea hellishly blaspheme and curse, and that often, and now especially in this time of trouble, in the day of our Saviors distress, when the Innocency of his cause, the Honor of his person, yea, his life lay at hazard, that such a Servant and Apostle should so basely and blasphemously deny and forswear his Master and Redeemer, and that at this time of need, upon so slight an occasion, as the voyce of a silly Damsel, or some ordinary man; he laid al these together, and laid them upon his heart, and he was not able to bear it, but went out, and wept bitterly.

The Art of Meditation, appeared especially in two things, as the special and proper parts of it.

1. The following of sin in a ful search and enquiry after

after it, and that hath been diſpatched in al the ſeverals of it, when we have viewed al the particulars of ſin, and brought in the whol and ful Sum together.

The ſecond part of Meditation.

The Second part of Meditation is in the faſtening of Meditation thus diſcovered upon the heart. All this while the ſinner hath been gathering and bringing in the ſeveral circumſtances, as it were ſo many ſingle ſticks ſcattered here and there, and bundled all together as it were by a joynt conſideration that they may be attended in their ful weight; *and laſtly, the ſinner hath lifted at them by meditation,* and found them heavy, but it hath not *as yet laid them and preſt them upon his ſoul, that he might feel them piercing and pinching as a burden unſupportable.*

The Second thing now to be attended as the laſt part of this Heavenly Art, and holy Duty, is to faſten theſe ſins upon our ſouls in the full weight thereof.

This is done in two things:

1 *By grapling with the Heart.*
2 *By getting above, or getting the better of the Heart.*

In the firſt of theſe *we act Meditation* as far as our endeavor wil go: In the ſecond *the Lord arms it with power* to do that it ſhould, and we cannot by the beſt of al our diligence and ability. In the former the ſoul is put in ſuit, the ſum of the ſeveral bils being charged upon it. In the latter we have ſentence paſt, and execution done upon the ſoul, that it is forced to ſeek out for payment and ſatisfaction, and that is awarded from under the hand of the Spirit in the High Court of Heaven.

To begin with the firſt of theſe, How Meditation grapples with the heart, I ſhal in ſhort ſet forth unto you, in three Directions or Rules.

The firſt comes within the Soul.
The ſecond laies hold upon it.
The third drags it to the Throne of Juſtice, and

drives it to seek out for payment, and satisfaction.

1. *It's the skil of meditation to come within the soul, and surprize it with the pursuit of the evil of sin, which hath now been laid open in so large and apparant manner.* It's the cunning of Wrastlers before they fasten upon the adversary whom they intend to foyl and bring under, they gather in upon them with the greatest wilinesse and dexterity they may, and then they lay hold with such advantages that they are not able to escape their hands: It's so in this Spiritual Service, it's the chiefest dexterity in Meditation to gather in upon the heart, *i.e.* the wil and affections (where the sink of sin lies, and who are wedded to their distempers) that it shall be forced to come under the Evidence of the Truth, and the tartnes of the evil of sin so discovered. It's one thing to sum up debts, and shew them to the Bankerupt; another thing to serve a Writ of them, to summon him to the Court that he may answer and give satisfaction: it's one thing to relate a mans bils, as a Servant, an Accomptant may; another thing to charge them upon him. So here, Meditation shewed the corruption, now summons and serves a *Sub-pœna* upon the soul; before it played the part of an Accomptant, brought in al Bils; now takes the place of a Serjeant, laies them to the charge, and attacheth the sinner: Meditation you must know, includes the highest strain of the strength of Reason, in the utmost extent of it; it's not the whol (nay indeed it's the least part of the) work of Meditation, to search and take a survey of the compass of corruption in al the circumstances thereof apprehended to the full, but it puts home an apprehension to the full, follows it, and dischargeth it upon the heart, and causeth it to attend for the while.

2. *Herein lies the Excellency and Efficacy of Meditation, That it forceth the Truth and discovery of sin with that undeniable Evidence upon the Heart, that it cannot*

not but own it as his debt, acknowledg what is his due, and the danger unto which he is justly subject by reason thereof, and is now compelled to find and confess it self to be under the soveraign authority of the truth, to be in the guilt of sin which it hath committed, and the punishment of sin that it hath deserved thereby, the case is now so clear it sees it cannot but own the guilt and it cannot avoyd the punishment. This is the reason rendred by the prophet of the sottishness of the deluded Idolater, that he cannot see his own folly and madness in worshipping an Image of wood, he stifles the strength of reason and setts not home that overbearing evidence of truth which his own experience would give in to his heart. *Isa.* 44. 16. *He burneth part thereof in the fire with part thereof he rosteth flesh, yea he warmeth himself and saith Aha I am warm, with the residue thereof he maketh a God even a graven Image he falleth down and worshippeth it.* whats the ground that any living man should so far go against common sence, he answereth ver. 19. *None considereth in his heart*, to say I have burnt part, I have roasted and warmed my self, and shal I make a God of the rest? The strength of reason in a right way would easily have forced such a conclusion upon the heart; but the corruption of the heart stifled and intercepted the power of reason and damped the evidence thereof, because it was not followed and fastened by the power of Meditation; *no man considereth in his heart*, the want of consideration made the heart not find nor own the evidence of that inference and truth. For we find this in our corrupt hearts naturally when sin and guilt comes to be charged upon us, and the dreadfullness of both are presented to our view, we willingly would hide our selves from the evidence and power of the truth, *as Adam from the presence of the Lord.* If we cannot deny it, yet excuse it, that the fault was in such and such, they are to be blamed, they were the cause and they enticed me to the commission, I therefore

am to be excuſed. Or if not excuſe it wholly yet mince and leſſen it, if not ſlight it, and caſt it aſide as that which neither needs nor deſerves conſideration. As the bankerupt, the debts he is not willing to pay he is willing not to think off, here now is the fruit and vertue, the power and profit of Meditation, it daſheth and ſcatters al theſe deluſions and deceits, ſtops the paſſage as it were that none of al theſe carnal and falſe pretences can keep off the ſtroke of the truth, and the ſting of ſin from the heart. No no replyes Meditation: theſe and theſe are your corruptions you muſt own them, the evidence of them are ſuch and ſo playn ye cannot excuſe them, the aggravations ſo many ſo great you cannot leſſen them, the plagues heavy and unavoydable you cannot prevent them. Thus it is *know it for your ſelves* theſe are your ſins, theſe will be your ruin. And I ſummon thee here to anſwer it before God in the ſight of men and Angels at the great day. When the heart cannot ſhuffle, nor ſhift, nor ſhake off the ſtrength and cleerneſs of the Truth, it's compelled to own its ſin and miſery, though happily not willing to leave the one, nor knows not how to avoid the other.

True indeed then Meditation hath attained its proper and powerful work, and is effectually bleſſed of God when our hearts are ſo affected, with the evil of our ſins, as in our judgments rightly informed, we did conceive them, and in our moſt ſerious Meditations concluded them, and indeed we ſhould ſhine to our utmoſt to attain this, and never give the Lord reſt, nor our own ſouls any reſt, until our hearts feel the bitterneſs of ſin, as by meditation we have found it made known in the word. This is beyond our power and reach, only its good to run after it, and though we cannot go as far as we ſhould, yet thus far we may go.

3. We may put the heart to ſilence for the while, ſtop and ſtifle ſuch gainſayings for a time and turn, and get the laſt word of the wil, as it were, notwithſtanding the

the waywardneſs thereof. *This hath its mervailous uſe, and leaves a great reſtraint upon the ſoul that it dare not vent it ſelf in ungodly practices but with a kind of awe and fear.* It deals with our ſouls as the Angel with Sarah, when ſhe laughed in herſelf as conceiving it impoſſible ſhe ſhould have a ſon in her old age, though the Angel had ſaid it, *Gen* 18. 12. the Lord asked *why did Sarah laugh, and ſhe denied it becauſe ſhe was afraid and ſayed, I did not laugh*; but the Lord followed her and held her to it, and would not let her go away ſo, *nay but thou didſt laugh.* So when the heart would fly off from the evil that is evidenced, and charged, either, excuſing or leſſening the hainouſneſs of the evil, or ſlighting the danger of it. either it was not my fault or its not ſo great, or the puniſhment is not ſo grieous and fearful as men would bear us in hand. Hold the heart to it, and do not ſuffer it to go away. Yes it was you that did it, you muſt own it, you ſhal find it upon your ſcore one day. you know and God knows and I know it, the time when they were committed the manner how, and how aggravated with many heightning circumſtances: It is ſo, know it; and thy damnation ſleepeth not, do not ſlight it, you wil never be able to endure it. Yes but I can: God wil abate it, or I can bear it, nay you cannot; God cannot abate it if you live in your ſins, and you cannot bear it. Take the leave of your heart thus when you go to bed; this is your condition, this wil be your miſery. The ſum of this firſt Rule returns to theſe three particulars.

1 Summon the heart to anſwer the charge. 2 Force the heart to own it. 3 Silence the heart for the while under it.

When thus Meditation hath come into the heart, let it lay hold upon the heart: That's the Second thing in this faſtening, when it hath arreſted the ſoul, the undeniable Evidence of the Truth, *then keep it under the arreſt:* 2.

reſt: as Officers do ſuch as they have attached, not ſuffered them to go out of the room, nor to be out of their ſight or preſence. When thou haſt with ſtrong hand as it were forced thy heart by the power of the Truth raiſed by Meditation from every Coaſt, as it were from all particular circumſtances and occaſions, that it yield the Charge which it cannot gainſay, owns the guilt under which it lies, and the puniſhment which it hath deſerved, ſits down ſilent under the Soveraignty of the Truth which it cannot controul; keeps the heart under this awful diſpoſition for ever. Do not ſuffer thy mind to go off from the Duty of Meditation, or thy wil and affections from under the impreſſions which were left upon it thereby. For if thou thus giveſt way out of ſloth, or weariſh negligence, thou art in hazard not only to loſe thy labor, but to leave thy ſoul much worſe by the abuſe of an Ordinance, than it was before thou did'ſt enjoy the liberty and practice of it. As Iron or any Mettal once melted, if it cool, it grows more hard than before, and more unfit to be faſhioned to any uſe; It's ſo with the heart awed and melted as it were, and made coming under the power of Meditation; if once thou groweſt careleſs, and it grows cold, it becomes more unteachable, hard, and unfit to receive any impreſſion of the Truth, with what ever power it be diſpenſed. Therefore by dayly conſideration keep the power of the Truth, and diſcovery of thy ſins within ken ſtil, before the eyes and ſight of thy ſoul, that ſo thou mayeſt keep the ſame heat and temper of Spirit, that awful, under, and ſilent ſubjection, to the Authority of the Truth, the terror and dreadfulneſs of thine own ſins; and here our greateſt watch is to be improved to follow this direction, becauſe the policy of Satan, the proneneſs of our own hearts, and profeſſed oppoſition that the Spirits of the ſons of men have againſt this Diſpenſation on Gods part, and this diſpoſition on ours; we are loth to bear it, Satan and the wicked are loth to ſuffer it in us, to have

have the rod dayly ſhaked over us, the filth and guilt and plagues due unto our ſins continually preſented and preſſed upon our conſciences, it's exceeding tedious and irkſom unto our natures: Fleſh and blood is very loth to bear it, Satan and the world are unwilling we ſhould continue in ſuch a courſe, becauſe they know it's the next way to make us weary of our lives, and of our ſins; therefore our corrupt hearts are willing to ſhake off ſuch conſiderations, and they are as reſtleſs to pluck our hearts from under the power of ſuch an Ordinance. It wil be our comfort, let it be our care to have dayly meditation keep us company in our dayly courſe, it wil keep the heart in an awful and under temper. Therefore the Apoſtle joyns both together, 1 *Tim.* 4. 15. *Meditate on theſe things, and be in them*, under the power and prevailing vertue of them. As it's ſure of al, ſo of this Truth alſo, *John*, 8. 31, 32. *Continue in the Truth, and it ſhall make you free.* It's not enough for an old cankered ſore to make it open, but we muſt keep it open; not only lance it, but tent it: to force a Truth by Meditation lanceth the ſore, attention to the ſame Truth in Meditation, is the tenting of the ſore, and that brings, though a ſlow, yet a perfect Cure. Dog the heart with the dayly conſideration of the diſcovery of ſin formerly ſet on, it wil tire a man out of his diſtemper, force the ſoul either to leave his Meditation or his corruption. It was that which cauſed the venom of Gods vengeance, and the poyſon of his own abominations to enter into his bones. *Pſal.* 51. 4. *My ſin is ever before me.* And this is the peculiar work of Meditation to keep things in preſent view, and freſh apprehenſion, it keeps ſin ever before mens eyes. The ſinner is forced to walk and talk with it, to wake and ſleep with it, to eat and drink his ſins, and curſes due to him for the ſame, they are carved out to him in every cutting, and ſet before him in every diſh that is ſet at the Table; *Pſal.* 119. 98. It was Meditation that drew out the marrow and quinteſſence

quinteſſence of Counſel and Wiſdom out of the Command; ſo that *David* came to have more underſtanding than the Antient; *Becauſe thy Commandements are ever with me*: Meditation drains and draws out the dreadful venom of a mans diſtempers, and makes it ever with him, where ever he goes, in every ſtep he takes, the guilt of his ſins is before him to accuſe, and Hell gaping to devour him; where ever he is, his ſin and guilt, his fears and terrors, his curſes and confuſion is with him to aſtoniſh him to al eternity. To have a wound or ſore is troubleſom, but to be raking in it dayly, though it were never ſo ſmal, were in truth intollerable. So it is here, Meditation is the multiplication of al theſe ſtings and terrors.

3. *When Meditation hath thus taken hold of the heart, it then drags it to the Throne of Juſtice, and then drives it to ſeek out for payment and ſatisfaction, without which it cannot be eaſed nor delivered.* This is the Markſtone, within which the bounds and limits of Meditation are to be confined that it may be ordered and acted aright, according to the Method of the Almighty, and a right Rule. When the ſoul is ſummoned to anſwer the Charge, and is under the Arreſt, and not able to eſcape, it finds now the ſeverity of Gods Juſtice that exacts all, even the utmoſt, the greatneſs of the debt, and it's own inability to anſwer; yet pay he muſt, or elſe he muſt periſh. It drives the ſoul to ſee a need of a Chriſt and mercy, and that it ought to ſeek out thither for relief and ſatisfaction: This is the aim of the Duty, and Gods end in faſtening thus the filth, and guilt, and deſert of ſin upon the ſoul, and it ſhould be our end alſo. And here a Three-fold extream unto which the ſoul is very ſubject in the exercile of this Service, is eſpecially to be avoided.

1 *Deſperate Diſcouragements.*
2 *Helliſh Provocations.*
3 *Falſe Conceivings of the meaſure of Gods Work,*

or

or the manner of his proceedings, which we frame to our ſelves in our own thoughts.

All which are aberrations from the right way and Rule, and prove marvelous prejudicial in our proceeding. And the Enemy ſtrives to put us upon all theſe by al the malice and policy he can uſe. If he cannot keep us in ſecurity, and hinder us from ſetting out in a Chriſtian courſe, his next endeavor is to wrack us upon rocks, and ſholes, and ſands, and ſo to hazard our paſſage. A word of all.

First, *We muſt beware of deſperate diſcouragements in the conſideration of our evil waies:* for firſt Satan uſeth al the crafts and wiles that he can, that we may not ſee our ſins, if we never know the danger, we wil never avoid, can never eſcape it. But if he ſee the ſinner reſolved to make a through ſearch, and to make work of it, he then labors to carry him as much to the contrary extream, that he ſhal ſee nothing but ſin; before he bore him in hand, he needed no pardon; now he perſwades him there is no hope of pardon: Before his eſtate was ſafe and good, and need not be altered, nor he trouble himſelf about it; it's now ſo vile and deſperate, there is no help, and cannot be recovered: Before he ſoothed up the ſinner, it was in his power to reform when he would; now he perſwades there is no poſſibility in Heaven or Earth to relieve. Do you not ſee (ſaies Satan) the greatneſs of the guilt of your former ſins that's dayly before you, the power of preſent corruptions prevailing more and more? do you not ſee that all the means you have, and endeavors you uſe, do you no good? only you encreaſe your ſin the more, by the abuſe of Duties and Ordinances; and God hath forſaken you, rejected your perſon, caſt out your prayers, bleſſeth not his Ordinances to you for good: talk not you of Grace and Mercy, you have deluded your ſelf with thoſe dreams too long; look not out for any ſuch relief which you know you have formerly neglected, and it's 1.

now too late to expect: ceaſe further troubling your ſelf, ſit down in your ſorrows, and ſink under the weight of your ſins, that is the reward you have deſerved, and the portion that is prepared for you of the Lord. This is Satans Logick, who would have us to abuſe this bleſſed Ordinance, and to go beyond the bounds and Lawful limits of Meditation ſet out by the Lord himſelf; who would have us to ſee and ſearch our ſins, ſo as to ſee a need of Mercy, and to ſeek out after the unſearchable riches of his Grace, not to keep us in our ſins, but that we may be carried out to him who wil recover us out of them. Abraham *conſidered not his own dead Body, or* Sarahs *barrenneſs*, Rom. 4. 19. he conſiderd them ſo far as to put him beyond hope in himſelf, *that he might hope above hope*; and it's the Lords command, *Iſai* 45. 22. *Look unto me from all the ends of the Earth, and be ye ſaved.* Look upon your ſins, miſeries, dangers, depths of deſpair, but look up to me out of all theſe.

2. *The Second Extream is, Helliſh provocations, which we are to watch againſt in this Work.* When the ſinner hath ſet himſelf as he conceives in Gods way, and about his work, and yet finds no ſucceſs in what he doth, *our ſelf-ſeeking hearts are apt to quarrel with the Lord, ſnarl at his Diſpenſation, and ſo riſe up, and fly in the face of the Almighty*: As that wretched King ſaid in the Siege of *Samaria*, 2 Kings 6. 33. *This evil is from the Lord, why ſhould I wait any longer?* So the ſoul, I have done what I can, endeavored what I am able, he doth not bleſs what I do, I find no more ſtrength, but my corruptions grow ſtrong, my heart worſe, my hopes and comforts leſs, I do but encreaſe my ſin, and haſten my damnation in what I do, why ſhould I endeavor any more?

I Anſwer in three things briefly.

1. *Do not ſet too high a price upon our own performances*, and overween our worth, and over value the ſervices we

we do, for that is a root of bitterneſs, and a cauſe of theſe Helliſh riſings; when we ſecretly conceit God doth not conſider our care, and the weight of our work and endeavor; if he did, he would otherwiſe reward us: As *Paul* ſaith, *Rom.* 9. 20. *Nay but, O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God?*

2. Beware, I ſay, *beware of bringing the righteous Command, and holy Law of God, which diſcovers our ſins, and requires our Duties, and our ability and feebleneſs together; as though the power and principle of the Work muſt come from us, and we go out in that.* For there wil follow high and helliſh provocations, fierce and fel rebellions againſt the Lord, when out of thine own heart thou doſt tug againſt thine own heart and corruption: for inſtead of the firſt principle of working (which is not in us, but in the Lord Jeſus) we become the firſt principle of ſinning; and then direful and dreadful effects wil follow, which I proteſs I am afraid to ſpeak, leſt I ſhould occaſion ſome tender hearts through miſtakes to queſtion.

3. *Check and ſtifle all thoſe riſings with that of the Apoſtle,* Rom. 9. 21, 22. *What if God will not?* and deny any Spiritual power of thine own, and ſtand ſtil, and expect no principle of any performance in thy ſelf, but that which is from God, in and by his Word, and let him alone with thy heart: Say, I have nothing, it's fit I ſhould have nothing it's righteous that God ſhould give me nothing. I do not expect to do any Spiritual good of my ſelf, nor yet expect that God ſhould give me Grace for what I do (becauſe al that I do is in) only I know it is with him to do what he wil; the wil, the power, and the work is al from him; therefore I wil lie in his way, and be at the pool, it may be he wil caſt me in: I know he can, and who knows but he may, if not, I have no reaſon to riſe up againſt him.

Men deviſe new Rules, and make new Goſpels of their own, and ſet ſuch a meaſure to themſelves in their own 3.

apprehenſions, which unleſs they can compaſs, they are reſolved to take no content, nay, not to follow any other direction than that they have coyned in their own conceit; and thus they pleaſe themſelves in their own apprehenſions, and reſolve to dwel in the conſideration of their ſins, until their hearts were brought ſo low, ſee themſelves ſo vile, the ſoul ſo through broken under the weight of their evil, and their own unworthineſs, elſe what have they to do with a Chriſt, or once to look toward him.

How we come to grapple with the heart by Meditation, we heard before; and becauſe this Work is wearifom in it ſelf, and tedious to our corrupt Nature, to be ever raking in the Wound, ſet a mans heart upon the rack, and keep it in reſtleſs diſquiet, that the venom of a mans guilt and plagues ſhould ever be before his eyes, and the Summons to Judgment ever ſounding in his Ears; the ſoul is not able to bear the unſupportable weight thereof, and therefore it cannot get to Chriſt to be cured and healed; it winds and turns every way that yet it may be eaſed, therefore the ſinner tries al concluſions that poſſible may be, that he may drive away the diſmal thoughts of his ſinful condition, and caſt aſide thoſe ſtabbing conſiderations that makes his heart die within him. Therefore he turns every ſtone, if he can drink it out, or game it out, or work it out, or pray it out, or any waies, or by any means wear out the thoughts that weary him of his life.

Thus he ſtrives if he cannot get good by his Meditation, yet to get rid of it; becauſe he cannot be bettered by it, he would not be troubled with it. As the Patient when he is not able to bear the extremity of the Corroſive, that would eat out the proud fleſh, takes it off and laies it aſide, rather keep his ſore though it hazard his life, than ſuffer the ſmart of it, and may be his perverſneſs coſts him his life. A ſerious conſideration ſet on, and kept on upon the ſoul, is like this extream Corroſive,

roſive, the rebellious heart is not able to endure the continuance of it, and therfore at laſt it wil make an eſcape from under the ſting and ſtrength of it, if poſſibly it may; and uſually it doth, unleſs the Lord put forth his powerful hand in ſome ſpecial help: and therefore herein lies the laſt, and the hardeſt part of Meditation, to get above the heart, and to get the better of it. *And to this purpoſe, the Directions are Three.*

1. *Labor to poſſeſs thy heart aright with a dreadful fear of thy ſinful and deſperate condition*: maintain it alive in thy ſelf, that it may go along with thee, that will keep thy Meditation alive alſo, and mightily prevailing. Where a mans fears are, his thoughts wil be, they carry a mans conſideration uncontroulably with them. Fear is a faithful Watch-man, it ſends poſt between the head and heart, it cals up our conſideration and thoughts, and carries them along with them, as the occaſion is preſented; and it's beyond al a mans skil, either to prevent the coming, or gainſay the power and overbearing force of fears. If once Satan get the heart fearleſs, it becomes careleſs and thoughtleſs, as I may ſo ſpeak. *Eliphas* couples them together, *Job*, 15. 4. *Thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer*; thou haſt taken off the activity of fear: fear hath fallen from his authority, and then it follows thou reſtraineſt prayer. Fear keeps Centinel, gives the Allarum dayly to the ſoul of the approaching plagues, as the deſerts of our ſins, cals up the beſt ability of our minds, and ſtrength of our thoughts to attend the ſervice, ſo that there is no ſleeping nor idling under ſuch a watch-man. What wil be the Judgments which your ſins deſerve, who can conceive? and how ſoon they may come, who can tel? Come they wil, that's certain; but when they wil come, that's uncertain: think, and ever be muſing how to prevent thoſe evils, that ye are never able to avoid, nor bear: *Job* compares fear to an Army of mighty force, that commands where it comes; *Job*, 30. 15. *Terrors are turned in upon*

upon me, they purſue me as the wind; therefore by an over-ruling command they cal for attendance of the ſtrength of the mind and man, and they cannot be put off, or laid aſide, or ſilenced, but preſs a man to his moſt ſerious conſideration, to be exerciſed with all diligence, how to foreſee and prevent the evils expected, *Pſal.* 48. 6. Fear is ſaid *to ſeize and lay hold* upon the ſinner, *as travel upon a woman with child.* We know when the appointed time of Travel comes on, there is no preventing or delaying of the work, as that the party can ſtay til the next day, or week, or hour; nor yet can ſhe put off her work to another, as ſhe may do her other occaſions, as a friend may go this way for her, a ſervant may do that which ſhe deſires; but when her throws come, no body can ſtay them, no body muſt bear them but her ſelf, and ſhe wil be forced to mind, and attend them and her own help, whether ſhe wil or no. The fear and dreadful expectation of Gods righteous Judgments deſerved and threatened, let them ſeize upon the ſinner, and let him travel under the terror of the Almighty; If God ſhould come and cal me to anſwer, how ſhould I help my ſelf? If the Lord do (as the times are in his own hands) what ſhould I judg or think of my condition? In a ſinful and miſerable eſtate I am (I am ſure) and how ſoon the pit may ſhut her mouth upon me, that I may be paſt hope and help, I know not; high time therefore to think how to be affected with this, and how to be freed from this damnable condition. *If the good man of the houſe did know the Thief would come, he would certainly watch*, he would liſten attentively at every ſtirring, *Matth.* 24. 43. Fear ſaies the evil wil come, and makes a man ever be thinking how to prevent it before it comes. As in a Siege, he that keeps the noiſe of the Drum, the ſound of the Trumpet, the clattering of Spears, the report of the Canon in his ears and fears, he wil be kept awaking, and be forced to attend upon his watch, and ſtand upon his Guard for his life. So do thou,

thou as the pſalmiſt ſaid, *Pſal. 9. laſt Put them in fear O Lord that they may know themſelves to be but men.* they wil know they are ſinful and mortal and wretched men that muſt come to death and judgment.

Awaken Conſcience, cal for the help of it, and put it into commiſſion, and it wil put forth an overruling power, for the ſettling of our apprehenſions in their attentive employments; when ſomtimes they are routed and put by their proper exerciſe, by the unruly and inordinate diſtempers of our hearts. For reaſon and underſtanding are the underlings as it were of inferior and lower ranck, and can but as ſervants and attendants offer and propound to the wil and affections; what they ſee and conceive may be moſt convenient, and the wretched waywardneſs of our hearts, wil either ſnub or ſilence them, reject or caſt them away, you befool reaſon, damp and pervert the light of judgment, tel reaſon ſhe is a fool and is deceived and drive it to another ſearch ſomtimes in the Saints reaſon and wil are for the work. The one pleads for it the other approves and deſires it; and yet the violence and outrage of ſome overbearing corruptions take off Meditation and hinder it againſt the heart and hayr againſt our judgment and deſire. Now conſcience is to be called in who hath received a ſupream authority, to overſee both, to right al ſuch diſorders and to ſee that the mind have its free cope, for the exerciſe of Meditation in his times and turns. And that this is ſo, Experience of all men in al ages wil give in evidence undeniable; the Godly, their Conſcience is controuler in their whol courſe by the beck and leaſt intimation of whoſe authority, the frame of their ſpirits inwardly and their carriages outwardly are awed, ſo as *they can do nothing againſt the truth* (2 Cor. 13. 8.) & dictate of their Conſcience they could do any thing againſt their credit and comfort and profit yea their very lives but not againſt their Conſcience. Witneſs again the wraſtlings of the ſpirits of the ungodly, when their 2.

their carnal reason hath contrived al waies and shifts their hearts earnestly desired, also how to stifle and stop the mouth of Conscience, to silence his dictates, that they might proceed in the practice of their lawless course, without stop and trouble and disquiet and the sad remembrance of that guilt and curse which Conscience tyres them with, but al in vain when Conscience is armed with authority and exerciseth that authority which is given it, is in his place and doth the office of his place but I say you must put it into commission; God can and doth when he wil, but we should also give way and help forward this work as we are able, according to that direction for our spiritual good in this behalf, for it is with Conscience as it is with men of worth in the countrey from whence we came, though they be as holy and gracious and wise when they are out of the commission of the peace as when they are in; yet then (when they are out of the commission) though they be willing and desirous according to the prudence the Lord hath given them to see and so to reforme al wrongs and disorders yet they want power. So it is with Conscience, when through our careless and rebellious carriage, it is either blinded or stifled, and so his place and exercise of his power is utterly hindred; we must therefore put Conscience into his commission as much as in us lyes; *i.e* help forward the exercise of that soveraign authority with the right whereof Conscience stands possessed according to the place the Lord hath set him in. Here are three directions.

1. *Let nothing joyn with Conscience in the command it gives and power it exerciseth but the holy and righteous Law of God.* This is that which makes the simplicity of the eye which our Saviour mentions, *Math.* 6. 22. and that which addes that overruling vertue and efficacie thereunto, insomuch that the text tells us; *where the eye is single the whol body is ful of light.* That eye I suppose is not bare reason or understanding enlightened, though

though that ſence is ſavory and included: but there is I conceive ſomewhat more, that eye is here meant according to the light and direction whereof the whol body is acted and ordered, that is a mans whol courſe and converſation is guided in a right way. That is by vertue of Conſcience eſpecially which hath an overpowring command with it, to act and carry out al the diſpoſitions of our hearts and actions of our lives, ſuitable to the light and level of the law of God, according to which it accuſeth or excuſeth; *This ſingle eye* is a conſcience ſincere, when nothing interrupts the work of Conſcience, but the law acts it, and it acts the man, thus the office Conſcience exerciſeth is from God and for God.

2. *Keep Conſcience trembling and tender, that it may be Eagle Eyed, and eaſily ſenſible of the leaſt evil* and do thou accuſtome thy ſelf to be ſure to take notice of the leaſt intimation it gives. This gives as I may ſay encouragement to Conſcience and helps forward the work, and honors that authority which it exerciſeth, Thus *David* was at the beck of his Conſcience even for the appearance and bordering of evil, 1. *Sam.* 24. 5. *his heart ſmot him becauſe he had cut off* Sauls *skirt.*

3. *Take undoubtedly the ſentence of Conſcience rightly guided to be Gods own ſentence.* That which he wil own and make good upon al the ſons of men at the great day of judgment; It wil paſs current and prevayl then either for thy Condemnation or for thy abſolution, It ſhould therefore prevail with thee for thy direction in this world thou ſhalt be judged by it then, it ſtands thee in hand to be ordered by it now. *Rev.* 20. 12. *The books were opened, and the dead were judged out of thoſe things written in their bookes according to their works.*

Thus there is ſome help and aſſiſtance lent to Meditation that it may awe and keep under the heart, and theſe have their uſe and fruit alſo in their time and meaſure

but yet a corrupt heart left to it self wil ſooner or later ſhut out Meditation and ſilence the ſerious exerciſe of his own thoughts againſt his ſin and himſelf to arraign himſelf every day to ſit in judgment and paſs the ſentence of Condemnation upon his own ſoul, he is not able to endure. He wil not part with his ſin and yet he cannot take pleaſure in his ſin upon theſe tearms. He wil ſhake off his fears and ſear his Conſcience, ſilence his Conſiderations that neither his thoughts nor terrors may trouble him any more, and ſo return again to his old haunt and there periſh.

3. Unleſs the Lord (in the laſt place) put to his Almighty hand and ſend his ſpirit from heaven to ſet on the work ſo that it ſhal undoubtedly ſucceed, maugre the malice of Satan and the oppoſition of our own corrupt hearts. An under officer of meaner rank may happily be too weak to cope with a company of prophane varlets, and therefore it may be they ſcorn and ſlight both his perſon and place, until the Prince himſelf come with numbers and power, he wil certainly bring them under, or be the ruin of the whol company. *So when the fears God hath ſent in be ſcattered, the dictates of Conſcience, as his officer, be laid aſide; the Lord himſelf wil take the ſoul to task and ſo reſteleſly purſue the ſinner with his own apprehenſions,* that he wil not reſpite him for the leaſt refreſhing from the evil that preſſeth in upon him; *Job.* 7. 14. *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone til I ſwallow down my ſpittle?* Its not the fire but the blowing of the coals that melts the mettal to become fit matter for a veſſel to be made. It's not the Law that breaks the heart of a ſinner, for *he neither is nor can be ſubject to the Law.* *Rom.* 8. 7. but its done by the ſpirit of Humiliation, who hath it in his own hand, and muſt blow up this fire it wil not melt elſe; ſtrike with this hammer its certain he muſt or elſe the heart wil never break: *Job,* 13. 26 *He makes a man poſſeſs the ſins of his youth.*

when

when he hath not minded them, may be forgot them; he revies them again and presents them, afresh to the view of the mind, *keeps the eyes waking, &c.*

They were pricked to the heart.

From the means we are now to come to the work it self, which is attended here with the subject or parties to whom it doth appertayn and in whom it was wrought and these are considered in a double respect: and so they wil afford us a double Instruction. This *pricking* it was not of al but some onely who heard the word upon whom it prevailed with saving success; some were pierced, some went away not touched not stirred therewith. As it fares with scattered shot when the piece is discharged against the whol flock or flight of the fowl, some are hit and slayne with it, some sit stil are not affrighted nor stirred with it.

Hence the doctrine is.

The same dispensation of the word which is powerful and profitable to some is unprofitable unto others. Doct.

They be together at the same time, in the same seat with the same ability, intention and devotion, and yet one is benefited by the means, the other receives no good from it. Luke. 7. 29. 30. *And al the people heard John preaching, and the Publicans justified God being baptized of him, but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves,* So again, Acts 18. 6. 8. *Some beleeved, others opposed and blasphemed,* Christ himself is layd as a stone of stumbling *for the rising and falling of many* 2 Cor. 2. 16. *The word unto some is a saviour of life unto life, unto others the saviour of Death unto Death.*

Reaſ. 1. *Becauſe God hath ſeveral ends to attain in theſe diſpenſations*; the execution of his juſtice in a righteous manner, the puniſhment of the ſins of the wicked by the means he affords, to recover them out of their ſins and the conveyance of the work of his grace to thoſe that belong to the election of his grace, It's a ſtrange inference God makes and way that he takes in the ſending of his meſſengers, *Math.* 23. 34. *behold I wil ſend you Prophets and Apoſtles, and ſome of them ye ſhal ſcourge, and ſome ye ſhal kil and Crucify*; this was to gratify their corrupt wils and ſo diſhonor his own ordinances, how can this ſtand with his juſtice; yes herin is his juſtice exceedingly magnifyed, *that the blood of al that have been ſhed might come upon them.* Nay which is yet moſt ſtrange; God then ſends the moſt glorious means of ſalvation to a people, when in his righteous judgment the work of Converſion ſhal be furtheſt off and they aggravate their condemnation. *Iſa.* 6. 9. *The Prophet had his tongue touched with a coal from the Altar*, mervailouſly gifted and fitted, and himſelf unwearied, but mark what his commiſſion was, *go* (ſaith the Lord) *make the heart of this people fat, and their Ears heavy leaſt they be converted, and ſhould heal them.* This was the way to convert them, and yet by this means they are hardened and ſet further off from converſion than they were before; The choyceſt phyſick and pureſt ayr meeting with corrupt and decaying bodies, kills immediately. So here. Our Saviour reſolves it. *Math.* 13. 11. Its not in the power or parts or improvements of ſome above others but *to you it is given to know the myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given.* The ſame fire we know wil melt the mettal which ſhal make veſſels of honor and diſhonor. He makes the wicked without excuſe, he makes his Saints ſerviceable to his own mind.

Reaſ. 2. *That herein he might ſhew the ſoveraignty of his good wil and pleaſure.* Rom. 9. 18. *He hath mercy on whom*

whom he will, and whom he will, he hardeneth. Hath not the Potter power over the clay, to make one veſſel to honor, another to diſhonor? He ſhews that the iſſue and event of al comes only from his own purpoſe and pleaſure. So the Apoſtle reſolves it, verſe 22. *What if God will?* So the Evangeliſt alſo, *John*, 12. 37, 38, 39. *Though Chriſt had done many miracles, yet they beleeved not*; Why did they not beleeve? He adds, *Therefore they could not beleeve, becauſe* Iſaiah *had ſaid he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they ſhould not be converted.* Hither our Savior comes, and ſits down in admiration, *Matth.* 11. 25, 26. *I thank thee Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent of the world, and haſt revealed them unto Babes, even ſo O Father, becauſe it ſeemed good in thy ſight.*

It ſhould provoke in us all, the greateſt fear in the enjoyment of the greateſt means; our deadlieſt bane may come from the beſt Ordinances; this is ſpeeding Phyſick, it wil work either one way or other, either kill or cure. *Now is the Ax laid to the root of the tree*, Matth. 3. 10. When Chriſt came, then was their deſtruction coming on with moſt haſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. When the Apoſtle had diſcovered the excellency of his Goſpel, in the plainneſs and power of it, he leaves with that Suppoſition, *If our Goſpel be hid, it's hid to them that periſh.* When *Moſes* was coming, *Pharaohs* ruine was coming. Where he multiplies moſt miracles, he multiplies moſt plagues; reſolve it, there is either ſome ſtrange plagues, or ſome ſtrange mercies near, when you enjoy the moſt excellent means of Grace; *Matth.* 11. 23. *And thou Capernaum which art exalted unto Heaven, ſhalt be brought down to Hell.* Uſe 1.

Hence again we learn, *The profitable and prevailing fruit of the means, is not in the means.* Therefore do not deceive thy ſelf, and ſatisfie thy ſelf barely in the having Uſe 2.

ving of these, as though they had inhærent, prevailing power in themselves. Bless not thy self barely by having of these; say, I may have these Ordinances, and yet have death as wel as life: yea, I may hear of Christ, may seek after him, and enjoy his presence here in the means, and yet never have any saving good by any of these, *Luke*, 2. 34. *He is as well for the fall of many, as for their rising.*

Use 3. *Exhortation to stir us up to use all means; and when thou seest the benefit received by som, seek thou also for a blessing upon them*; as *Esau* said, *bless me, me also.* So say thou, such a proud heart hath found the Word humbling of him, such a discouraged heart hath felt the Word comforting of him; Lord, let the Word humble me also, pierce me also, comfort me also. The Husband-man sows, and waits for the first and latter rain, and as *David* said, *mine eyes fail for thy Salvation*, saying, when wilt thou comfort me? when wilt thou enlighten me, quicken me? when wilt thou break my heart? when wilt thou make me spiritual, and painful, and thriving in a Christian Course.

Use 4. Lastly, *Return praise and thanksgiving to the Lord for what thou doest receive, and find in the powerful dispensations of the Word.* God hath marvelously separated his mercy unto thee, in giving not Physick, but health in it; not Bread, but the staff of nourishment with it; not the Word, but the life and profit of it. Be thou marvelous thankful and careful not to come and hear as others, but *set thy heart to the Word*, bring *a good and honest heart with thee* to the hearing of it. Do not powr out thy words in prayer, but powr out thy heart, &c.

Secondly. Again Secondly, Look who these are, who are now wounded and pierced with the preaching of *Peter*, and we shal find them some of the worst of the crew and company of refuse wretches, who were not only guilty of the death of Jesus, but such who now set themselves

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in an inhumane manner againſt the Apoſtles of Chriſt; and carried themſelves with ſcorn and contempt againſt their perſons and proceedings, the publiſhing and preaching of the great things of God in the higheſt ſtrain of oppoſition; for if ye look back into the 12, and 13. verſes, you ſhal there ſee the miracle of tongues wrought a twofold effect in the hearers; ſome were amazed, verſe 12. ſome mocked, verſe 13. and to theſe *Peter* addreſſeth his ſpeech, his ſpirit being ſtirred in a holy indignation againſt ſo helliſh diſtempers, againſt the gracious and miraculous expreſſion of the Spirit of the Lord; to them he ſaies, ver. 14, 15. *Be it known unto you, that theſe men are not drunk as ye ſuppoſe, &c.* to theſe mockers and deriders he now ſpeaks, and *they* are now *Pricked.* Some were wounded, and theſe were the worſt, and ſuch as did oppoſe.

Hence the Doctrine to be obſerved, is,

The Lord many times makes the Word pierce and prevail moſt powerfully in the hearts of ſinners for their everlaſting good, when they oppoſe the power thereof, and their own good therein. Doct.

In a word. The Lord often makes the Word work then effectually, when the ſcornful heart is ſet againſt the work, and is at a diſtance from it. This is the Lords profeſſion, *Iſai.* 43. 21. *Even the people that he formed for himſelf,* and ſuch as *ſhould ſhew forth his praiſe,* thoſe whom he would make moſt precious to himſelf, and ſo did; yet ſee in the following words how he found theſe, and when he formed theſe for his own turn, ver. 24, 25. *Thou haſt bought me no ſweet Cane with money, neither haſt thou filled me with the fat of thy Sacrifices:* when they were wholly careleſs of his Ordinances,

nances, and cast his commands behind their back, yea, *thou hast made me serve with thy sins, and thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities*; instead of serving God, they made his Ordinances, and the Priviledges he provided, and so his Love, and Mercy, and himself therein, to serve their sinful and sensual hearts; they put God to it, his Patience and long-suffering, that he could no longer endure their lewdness. Yet then he ads, he would do most good to them when they had no care of their own good; and then enlarge his compassions to them when they multiplied their provocations against him. *I, even I for mine own sake, will blot out thine iniquities, and remember thy sins no more.* This was Gods dealing with *Ephraim*, and the reason of that his saving health he extended towards him, when he rushed on in the waies of wickedness, according to the waies of his own heart, *Isai* 57. 17, 18. *For the iniquity of his covetousneß*, of his evil lustings, *I was wroth with him, I smote him, I hid my self and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his own heart*; here is the highest strain of rebellious sturdiness of Spirit. When God is angry he smites the soul, and hides away himself; yet to be froward in the mid'st of al these heavy expressions of his displeasure that might reform him, yea, to go on after in the waies of wickedness. If ever a people seemed to be past cure, prepared for ruin and confusion, past all hope either of enjoying or profiting by the means; this might seem to be the time, these the men; but Gods waies and thoughts are not as ours: for mark the next words; *I have seen his waies, and I will lead him, and heal him, and restore comfort to him, and those that mourn with him.* Then God *will see him*, when he cannot see himself; then God *will heal his frowardneß* who cannot help himself; then God *will guide him* when he cannot guide himself; then he wil make *him mourn, and others mourn with him*, and mourn for him, and *he wil comfort them both.*

both. And our Savior for this very end, *hath ascended up on high to receive gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord may dwell among them also.* Psal. 68. 18. Eph. 4. 8.

This may suffice for the Proof of the Point: See the breadth of it laid open in Three Particulars.

1. *He presseth in upon men by the prevailing work of his Grace in his Ordinances, before they look after him or their own welfare, prevents their imaginations and desires.* When men lie snorting in their sins, sit down securely, wel apay'd with their careless and corrupt condition: the things of Grace, and Christ, and Mercy, are not so much as in their thoughts or dream; the Lord beyond their expectation, lets in the discovery of himself, and the manifestation of the work of his Spirit, before they be aware of it. *Jos.* 24. 2. compared with *Acts*, 7. 2. Thus it was in the calling of *Abraham*, when the Lord brought him to himself, and made him the Father of the Faithful, when *Terah* and he were drowned in Idolatry, without God, without Christ, and without Hope, never heard of any such thing as life in a Savior by Faith, never hearkened after it, but worshiping the Idols of the Heathen. *The God of Glory, saies* Stephen, *appeared to our Father* Abraham, *when he was in* Mesopotamia, *before he dwelt in* Charran; when he dwelt in the mid'st of Idolaters, and never had the least thought or apprehension of the Covenant of Grace; the Lord then appeared to him, and bad him *come out from thy country and kindred, and from thy fathers house,* and so from their Idolatrous Practices. God finds men before they seek him, he makes known himself before they enquire after him; *Isai.* 65. 1. *I am sought of them that asked not after me, I am found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me, behold me, to a Nation that was not called by my Name.* How often have we heard it, and known it in our own Country; the Lord hath sent a Minister to see the Country, and visit his

friends, and it hath been the day wherein he hath been pleased to visit the heart of many a careless ignorant Creature, who came idling as to a May-game, or Morris-dauncing, and dropped into the Assembly; and the Word hath laid hold on him before he hath been aware of it; how often hath the loose Prodigal come to riot it at the Fair and Market, and hath been drawn in to hear beyond his purpose, cross to his desire, and wished himself out of the place, and yet hath heard that before he departed, which hath been a word of life and peace unto his soul, for which he saw cause to bless God to all Eternity, *Matthew he is sitting at the receit of Custom*, minds how to take money, Peter *and* James *are casting a Net into the Sea*, to see how to make provision for themselves; Christ cals them to himself, and so to an Interest in Grace and Glory, when they had not so much as a thought that way; It's that of the Apostle, *Rom.* 9. 30. *The Gentiles who sought not after righteousness, they have attained unto righteousness, and yet the Jews who pretended great pains and search that way, they fel short of it.*

2. As the Lord presseth in upon men before they be aware, and beyond their purposes, *So many times he takes the worst of men, whose hearts and lives are at the greatest distance from the holiness of his word and waies*: Thus our Savior professeth that the *Publicans and Harlots*, such as were in the rank of the most notorious wrerches, *Go before the Scribes and Pharisees into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Luke, 3. 9, 10. Luke, 7. 29. Which carried a form and appearance of Godliness in the view of the World. And you shall observe the Lord to gather the most glorious Churches in the places, and amongst the people where there have been the puddles and sinks of all wickedness. *Ephesus, Corinth, Creet*, notorious and loathsom in all Histories for hideous and hellish abominations, and yet there the Lord gathered Churches of the greatest beauty, Saints of most glorious excellen-

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cy of Grace, such as were destitute of no Grace, and yet the place destitute of no villany, 2. *Cor.* 6. 7. When he had reckoned up a catalogue of most accursed Villanies, yet professed God brought precious Gold out of dirt and dross, *Know ye not that no Adulterers, Idolaters, Effœminate, abusers of themselves with man-kind, nor Theeves, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God; and such were some of you.* Ver. 10. 11. *But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified by the Name of Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

3. *The Lord Jesus prevails with these that are the most reffuse persons [illegible] when they are in the ruff and height of all their wickedneſs*; when they are in the extreameſt out-rage and running riot in the waies of wickedneſs, beyond the bounds of modeſty and moderation. Our Savior Chriſt ſtops not *Paul* in his proceeding, when his injurious and blaſphemous carriage was in the bud & beginning, while his Spirit was ſtirring with the pangs of pride and fierceneſs, that he ſtood as a Spectator, and Abettor, and *kept the Garments of thoſe that ſtoned* Stephen. Acts, 22. 20. not yet attaining that impudency and violence to lay hands on the Saints, and to fly upon the prey. But when he became more *mad in malice* and cruelty, and became a principal in ſuch out-rages, a leader in bloody perſecutions. *Acts*, 26. 11. that he goes armed with Authority, *breathing out threatnings* and ſlaughter, Acts, 9. 1. reſolves to attach and impriſon all ſorts and al Sexes, men and women that profeſs the Name of Jeſus. When he is running full carreer in ſuch fierceneſs and cruelty, the Lord then meets him, unhorſeth him, takes his weapons out of his hand, tears his Commiſſion, and cauſeth him *to bear his Name*, who had before blaſphemed it, *to care for all the Churches who before deſtroyed them*, he makes him fall at his foot, and follow his Command and colors, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* The Jaylor beyond his

place, commission and allowance, he scourges and cruelly handles *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and when he prides and pleaseth himself in his cruelty and inhumane behaviour towards the poor servants of the Lord he then takes him to task *Acts*, 16. 30. puls him down upon his knees and forceth him to seek for mercy and direction from those to whom he shewed no mercy nor humanity before, *he trembling fel down saying Sirs what must I do to be saved?* The Lord stops not *Manasseh's* out-rage when he enters first upon his kingdome (as he easily could have done) but suffers him to fil up the measure of his iniquity, so that the bottom of Hel could not afford abominations more [illegible] than were practised by him, *he filled Jerusalem with blood, shut up the dores of the sanctuary, gave himself to witch-craft and conjuring.* The Lord now grapples with him by the power of his grace, and after his mighty provocations, persevering also in those desperate courses; the Lord humbles him mightily under his almighty hand and brings him to the obedience of his wil, 2 *Cron.* 33. Chap.

The Reasons of the point are four.

Reas. 1. *The greatneß of his power is hereby discovered*, and that he hath *laid salvation upon one that is mighty*, that when al the power of darkness hath proceeded to his highest pitch, when the subtilties of Hel and al the venome of the corrupt heart of man furthered by al advantages, that the world and counsel and company of ungodly have brought in al forces, to mannage and maintain a wicked and ungodly course herein appears that power of the Almighty *whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself*; in that he batters down al the strong holds of the hearts of the sons of men and every high thought that lifts up it self against the obedience of his truth, dasheth all those temptations and delusions whereby the Enemy hath advanced his Kingdom in the hearts of his captives and vassalls, so that Satan and al

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his fortifications ſhal down like lightning before the diſpenſation of the truth: this is indeed the power of God unto ſalvation *Rom.* 1. 16. this is the out-ſtretched *arme of the Almighty revealed in this* ſo wonderful a work *Iſa.* 53. 1. thus the Apoſtle 2. *Cor.* 10. 4. *the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, to caſt down ſtrong holds.* It was that which *Jethro* obſerved wiſely and as truly concluded, *Exod.* 18. 11. *Now I know that the Lord is greater than al Gods for in the thing wherein he dealt proudly he was above them.* It is moſt true in this caſe, herein it appears that the Lord is greater than al gods, the god Pride and Stubbornneſs, the god Self-love, and Self-confidence, the god Covetouſneſs and Uncleanneſs; greater than all the Devils in Hel, than al the Temptations in the World, and al the diſtempers in the hearts of ſinners, *becauſe in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them.* As he ſayed *I know not the Lord I will not let Iſrael go,* So when they deal proudly, I know not the command of a Chriſt to obey it, I know not the reproof of a Chriſt to reforme by it, I know not, acknowledg not the threatnings and terrors of the truth which are denounced, know that God can if he wil, and its certain he wil if he ever take pleaſure in thee to bring thee out of bondage he wil be above thee in al theſe, when you ſhal ſee the ſturdy ſtoop, the ſtubborn yield, and he that was fierce and proud as Belzebub himſelf to fal at the foot of Chriſt, tremble at every truth, melt under the leaſt admonition and counſel, herein you may know the greatneſs of God indeed, when *Peters* chayn fel, the iron Gate gave way, he concluded it was a meſſage of God. And therefore *Moſes* looks to this in God when he deſires the removal of the great provocations of the Iſraelites; *Numb.* 14. 17. *I pray thee let the power of my Lord be great according as thou haſt ſaid.* When the wals of Jerico fel flat to the ground at the ſounding of Rams horns it argued the breath of the Almighty went out

Reaſ. 2. out with them. So to ſee the mighty fortes of carnal reaſon which men have reared againſt the force of the truth, and when they have entrenched themſelves in the deſperate reſolutions of the ſelf-willy, waywardneſs of their own hearts yet to become eaſie, yielding, and under, ſo that a child may lead them, the greatneſs of Gods power appears in this.

The riches of mercy is hereby eſpecially magnified which outbids al the baſeneſs of our hearts, the miſcariages of our lives, beyond al our unkindneſſes when they are beyond meaſure, herein the Lord ſeems to give way to the wickedneſs of the ſons of men, to ſwel beyond the common bounds, that his mercy may appear to be beyond al bounds, and boundleſs and bottomleſs that's the vertue of the ſalve when the wound is deadly to heal it, the excellency of the phyſick when the diſeaſe is paſt hope, and help, then to recover it. *Rom.* 5. laſt. When the Apoſtle had diſputed concerning the freeneſs of grace he asks this queſtion *why was the Law added?* he anſwers, *that ſin might appear* and be aggravated, becauſe the Law was given, and the end of that, and the uſe that God made of it, *that where ſin abounded grace abounded much more*, when ſin hath done what it can by al advantages, mercy wil do more than ſin, *that as ſin had raigned unto death ſo grace might raigne unto life through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, God ſuffered pride and rebellion to raigne in *Paul*, for this end that his mercy and patience towards him might be exemplary 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. hence it is that the times wherein ſin gets ground and prevails they are called the times of mercy wherein that gets preheminence *Ezek.* 16. 5. 8. When the Church was *weltering in her blood*

Reaſ. 3. and had neither worth in herſelf nor ſuccor from without, *then was the time of love*, not a time when it was deſerved but a ſeaſon wherein it ſhould be magnifyed, otherwiſe in reaſon the Lord might have taken many other times more ſutable to his love. Nay the more vile & miſerable

miserable they were, Herein is the soveraign vertue of his love and mercy to make them acceptable and beloved.

Look we at the condition of the parties from whence also another reason of the dispensation of the Lord may be discovered, *hereby the Lord staines the pride of al flesh, and confounds all the carnal confidence that men seem to place in the creature*; for should either the wisdom of the wise, the pomp of the rich, the parts and paines and studyes and dexterity of the prudent and learned, the honor and magnificence of the mighty, and the Monarchs of the world should have found the Profit of the means or received the prevailing power of the holy spirit in his ordinances for their saving good. Men would have eyed and honoured those excellencies, and doated upon them, hung al their hopes and confidence upon the presence and work of these; so that the conclusion out of carnal reason would have issued here, none but such should have had any good, none of al these that had these outward trappings should have wanted it, and so some would have been discouraged, that could not attain these, others would presume and be secure that did possess them, and the Lord have been deprived of that honor both of confidence and dependance that was due from al. That the Lord might lay al these excellencies in the dust and forever wean the hearts of men from setting their hopes thereupon, he takes the weakest and the worst and those also when they are at the greatest Under of al basenes and wretchednes, they shal outstrip al those in whom there is this seeming worth, of al the surpassing eminency that the Earth can afford. Thus the Apostle disputes, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. *you see your calling, not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble*, these are the three excellencies in the world. The inward abilities of wit and learning, the nobility of birth, the priviledg of our place and state. The Lord crosseth the whol course of carnal excellency, *he chooseth the foolish to confound the wise, the weak to confound*

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the mighty, base things, that are not, to bring to nought things & things that are, nothing, of any probability or possibility in an ordinary way, that might have attained any good, being wholly set, against it nothing of ingenuity or moderation or common restraynt, but when they grow desperatly wicked yet then the Lord doth good *that no flesh may glory in his presence*; that it is not in your wealth or parts or endeavours or outward pomp, behold these poor base creatures, base in their condition and yet more base in their carriage, scant worse in the bottom of Hel, yet these are called. Oh how wil it confound the wise to see the fooliſh of the world brought to the knowledg of Christ when they never knew the things belonging to their peace, how wil it confound the Civilian and subtil hypocrite who had painted over his profession with appearance of Godliness to see a prophane wretch whose leudness time was when he loathed, as though his person were not fit to be looked on, yet now pulled out of his sink and dunghil, made a glorious saint in heaven when he shal be cast out amongst dogs. So the Prophet. *Ezek.* 16. last.

Reas. 4. Look we at the Work it self, *There is also a depth of infinite wisdom in this Dispensation to bring that about in many hearts, and that by this means, and that with most succeß the Lord suffers many to go to a great exceß of sin, before he laies hold upon them, or seems to take them to task, that the großneß of the evils might make way for their more easie conviction*; and so for the entry of the Word upon their souls, and their subjection to the power and evidence thereof. Men or Hypocrites of a smooth refined carriage, when they carry a conformity in their course to the wayes of Godliness, and have strength of carnal reason to make the best of an unblameable life, it's hard for any to come within them, either to pass a Sentence of their present condition, because love hopes the best, when it can bring no evidence of the contrary evil, much less to perswade their estate is unsafe

ſafe and not ſincere; but when the Lord lets looſe Satan, or ſome loathſom luſts upon them, that they become ſcandalous and notoriouſly naught, and their Hypocriſie appears in their fore-heads, then they yield to go out of the Camp, and confeſs they are unclean. As the Phyſitian when he would cure the cold Palſey, he is content to caſt his Patient into a burning Feaver, becauſe he can tel how to come the better to the Cure. So here, our Savior wiſheth, *Rev.* 3. 17. *I would thou wert either hot or cold*, becauſe then he could tel how to deal with her; if either truly good, he would encourage; if openly naught, he would then convince her, he knew how to apply the means, and ſhe would be content to receive it; bu when ſhe conceives her ſelf rich, ſhe wil receive nothing; wiſe, ſhe wil hear nothing. So I have known ſome in experience, that would take it in indignation that any ſhould queſtion their Grace, until the Lord left them to ſome foul fals, groſs cozenage, ſcandalous drunkenneſs, &c. that hath made them go deeper, &c.

Uſe. 1. *The effectual operation of the Word, the breaking, and ſo converting the heart of a ſinner depends not upon any preparation a man can work in himſelf, or any thing he can do in his corrupt eſtate for the attaining of life and Salvation.* For had the Lord expected the good uſe of a mans free wil in the imployment and exerciſe of the works of civility and outward moral behavior, had he looked for the husbanding of the ſtock of thoſe moral abilities which are left in corrupt nature, or refined by the expreſſions of providence in the reſtrainning ſtrokes of common grace, or had the Lord ſtayed until theſe converts had either valued the worth of the Apoſtles and their adminiſtrations, and painfully improved the advantages, of the means of grace and life now brought home to their dores, or brought a teachableneſs of ſpirit to the ordinances. If either the preparation and ſaving converſion of the ſouls of men had depended upon any ſuch emprovement of themſelves, it's certain

they had not now been made broken-hearted ſinners, or ſavingly brought unto the Lord, and for ought any man can tel had never attained it. But when croſs to the courſe of humanity they mocked and ſcorned both the perſons & meſſage of the Apoſtles contrary to truth, they caſt reproaches and contumelious contempt upon them, *theſe men are ful of new wine*, nay when they were carried with profeſſed oppoſition, malignant enmity againſt their perſons and diſpenſations, yet now the Lord preſſeth in upon them, by the prevailing power of his ſpirit and word and doth good to them, when they ſet themſelves by al the policy and rage they could to oppoſe the work of the Lord and their own everlaſting welfare; clear it is therefore that this ſpiritual diſpenſation of breaking or calling of them home depends not upon any preparation which was done, nor any performances al which for the preſent were profeſſedly oppoſite to their own welfare, but meerly upon the power and good pleaſure of the Lord, and the work of his ſpirit which he puts forth when it ſeems beſt unto himſelf *its not in him that wills or runs* ſayes the Apoſtle, he puts both together and denies ſucceſs unto both, that ſo he may take off al the cavils that could be made or indeed pretended. For had it been ſaid the means were powerful and in a plentiful manner beſtowed but men would not do what they might and ought, may be there was a ſlight velleity, ſome powerleſs wiſhing but there wanted the ſtrength of endeavor. behould he excludes both *It's not him that wils* only, nay let him *run* for it, put to the beſt of his abilities, that wil not do the deed. It's not there but in the good pleaſure of him *that ſhewes mercy Rom.* 9. 17. And hence it is that *the very ſpirit of bondage*, terror and aſtoniſhment, and ſenſible troubles of heart, which many times wicked men that fal finally ſhort of ſaving grace, yet attain in ſome meaſure or degree even that is beyond the reach of a mans own power, *Wee have not received the ſpirit of bondage to fear Rom.*

8. 15. even that is a gift and must be received and is dispensed freely, al that a natural man can do cannot cal for his old terrors and troubles which out of his sensuality he hath devised wayes to wear out, unless the Lord wil set them on by his hand. And hence the Apostle makes the exception so general to *Timothy*, 2. *Tim.* 1. 9. *Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace*, so the resolution is into the free grace of God & the soveraignty of his purpose, issues not from any work of ours, hangs not upon that hinge, & hence it is the Lord denyes the communication of means to some whom he foresees would use and husband them to beter advantages and bestowes them upon such who neither prize nor profit by al they have, nay are open contemners and opposers of the truth. *Wo be to thee* Chorazin *wo be to thee* Bethsaida *for if the great workes that have been done in thee had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon *they would long before this day have repented in sackcloath and ashes*, Math. 11. 21. yea he professeth *Ezek.* 4. 6. *If he had sent* Ezekiel *to a strange people and of hard language such as had never heard* of the things of God and grace *they would have hearkned to him when the* Jewes *rejected his counsel* and the commands of God dispensed by his means, Hence it is the Lord to shew the soveraign freedom of his pleasure, that he may do with his own what he wil, and yet do wrong to none, he denyes pardon and acceptance to those who seek it with some importunity and earnestness *Prov.* 1. 28. *they shal seek me early and shal not find me* and yet bestowes mercy and makes known himself unto some *who never sought him*. Isai. 65: 1. That we may learn from hence for ever to fear and avoyd that hæretical doctrine of the Arminians so deeply dangerous to the salvation of mens souls and so exceedingly derogatory to the glory of Gods free grace in Christ, who maintayn that if we do what we can, and improve the natural abili-

ties we have, and the means we do enjoy God wil not deny to give us the grace ſupernatural we want. An opinion ſo groſs that the Popiſh ſchool wil not abide by it, and the moſt ingenuous of the Jeſuits themſelves do profeſſedly oppoſe and condemn. For beſides that it deſtroyes the comfort of a ſinner & daſheth the hopes of al the ſons of men, for if none ſhould be ſaved but thoſe that do what they can, its certayn never any man either in nature or grace did what he could either emproveing his natural abilities as he might according to ſpecial opportunites and liberties put into his hand, nor yet faithfully ever to husband their grace according to what they received and was expected, and might alſo be juſtly challenged at their hands; If therefore their hopes had their ſupport here, their hearts and hopes and comforts and happineſs and al would fayl them, and they muſt needs have their lives and their everlaſting condition ever in doubt and ſuſpence, and in iſſue ſink down in everlaſting diſcouragment, but I ſay beſides this it deſtroyes the whol frame of grace in the carriage of it.

1. *Firſt it undermines the very foundation of the diſpenſation of grace which proceeds as we have heard from the purpoſe and Good pleaſure of the Almighty* thither our Saviour looks as at the fountain from whence al ſpiritual favours proceed: *Math* 11. 26.. I thank thee Father &c. *Even the Father becauſe it pleaſeth thee* 2 Tim. 1. 9. *called not according to our works and free wil, but according to his purpoſe and free mercy* Rom. 11. 19. *Whom he will he hardens, and whom he wil he ſhews mercy to* ſoften and converts; he doth not expect how we improve the freedom of our wils and perform our works, but he gives both *wil and deed* whereas this opinion reſolves the iſſue of my converſion and ſo of ſalvation into my own purpoſe, and as he ſaid makes Gods free grace lackey after mans free wil. For it is in a mans power and pleaſure to do what God hath put into his own power according to his own wil, if I wil

wil do but what I can, if I wil, and improve abilities and advantages afforded, but as I may according to this conceit, God wil never deny me the Grace I want, the mercy and Salvation I do endeavor after. So that the laſt reſolution in this way is left upon a mans own free wil, if he will not do what he may, he miſſeth his good, if he do what he can, he ſhal not fail to receive it.

2. *It cuts the very ſinews of the Covenant of Grace, and the freedom thereof.* For upon this ground and grant, it's not in Gods hand to diſpoſe of his own mercy, but it is in my hand, and left in my choyce; If I wil improve liberties and advantages, I may have the Grace I want; if I wil reject both, then it's my folly and negligence, I muſt bear the blame, and endure the miſery, and thank my ſelf, when it was in mine own power, to provide for mine own comfort. This courſe iſſues and returns into the Covenant of Works: theſe *Paul* ſets in ſuch a direct oppoſition, as that they cannot ſtand the one with the other, *Rom.* 11. 6. *If of Grace, it is no more of Works, for then Grace was no more Grace; if of Works, then not of Grace, for then Works were no more Works; what then Iſrael hath not obtained,* q. d. It was not the bulk and body of the people, nor in the power, ability, or performance of any perſon; *but the Election hath obtained:* Not becauſe Iſraelites, not becauſe they had ſuch Priviledges, not becauſe they uſed ſuch Ordinances, and took up the performance of Duties required; but becauſe elected, therefore called, therefore juſtified. The contrary courſe which iſſues the obtaining of Grace into the improvement of abilities and advantages, returns as I ſaid into a Covenant of Works, for the Condition in the ultimate reſolution ſtil remains in my power, the ſtaff is left in my hand. It's al one upon point to have money enough in my hand to pay, and to have it in my power to command, if at my pleaſure in anothers hand; and ſo I diſpoſe of Gods mercy, and my own good in the iſſues.

Whereas

Whereas in the Covenant of Grace, all is firſtly, freely, wholly, and only in the hand of the Lord to diſpoſe, to whom he wil, what, when, and after what manner he wil. In this Covenant he doth not require the condition only; but the Lord Chriſt as the Second *Adam*, he performs the Condition alſo; not only requires *new hearts, but puts new ſpirits into us*; not only commands us to beleeve, but enables us; and as he himſelf ſpeaks, *Gives us to beleeve*, Matth. 13. 11.

3. *This croſſeth the end of the Covenant, and the ſcope of the whol courſe, and adminiſtration of the means of life and Salvation*; which is to ſet forth the glory of the Riches of Gods Grace in the Eyes of all, and to the Conſciences and acknowledgments of all hearts, a return of al thankfulneſs to him, and a total dependance upon him for ever. Therefore the Lord choſe the baſe and deſpicable things *that are not, to confound things that are*, 1 Cor. 1. laſt. *that no fleſh ſhould glory in his ſight, and that he that glories, might glory in the Lord.* By what Law is boaſting excluded? by the Law of Works? Nay, but by the Law of Faith. *Rom.* 3. 27. *For if* Abraham *had been juſtified by Works he had whereof to glory.* Rom. 4. 2. And therefore as in the Material, it's ſo in the Spiritual Temple, the laying of the firſt and loweſt ſtone, and adding of the laſt, all the people *cried, Grace, Grace*; and hence the whol chain is as it were of Gods own making and tying, *Whom he predeſtinated, them he called*; *and whom he called, them he juſtified*; *and whom he juſtified, them he glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. and the end and iſſue of all, is ſet down by the holy Apoſtle, *Eph.* 4. 15. when all the Churches ſhall meet at the great day of Appearance in the unity of the Faith, it is *to the acknowledgment of the Son of God.* By whom were you called, humbled, juſtified, adopted, ſanctified? By the Son of God, receive all from him, return all to him. But this Opinion plucks the Crown from Chriſts Head, the Glory from his Work, the Praiſe

Praiſe from his Grace, and gives it to the will of man, and the improvement of thoſe abilities and opportunities the Lord hath put into his hand; becauſe by this means he makes himſelf to differ. For ſet *Paul* and *Judas* in the ſame rank, let them enjoy the ſame means, ſhare in the ſame liberties, advantages, opportunities, one as the other: *Paul* by the good uſe of his free will, he plaies the good Husband, he doth what he can, and he obtains what he wants, and receives Grace; *Judas* plaies the Prodigal and Unthrift, doth not what he ſhould and might, and therefore he wants Grace: ſo that they were both equal in the priviledges and opportunities they received from God, they differ not there; that *Paul* hath that Grace which *Judas* wants, he may thank his own pains and improvement, and glory in himſelf and them. Nay, *Paul* is not bound to be thankful to God for any thing more than *Judas*; for he had no more from God by this Opinion than *Judas*, what he had and received more, it was by his own improvements, which to conceit, is a moſt helliſh deluſion.

Laſtly, If by the improvements of Abilities and Advantages we certainly receive Spiritual Grace, *then this muſt follow, Either becauſe ſuch improvement deſerves Grace; or do immediately and nextly diſpoſe the ſoul to receive Grace; or that ſuch improvements have a promiſe made to them from God.* But none of al theſe can be granted. 4.

They cannot deſerve Grace, becauſe when we have done what we can, we muſt conclude as we ſhal have cauſe to confeſs we are unprofitable, *Luke* 17. 10. *The plowing*, and ſo the praying of the wicked *is ſin*, his moſt beautiful performances are *from the fleſh*, and ſo ſinful, and deſerve the juſt wrath of God, and therefore no Grace nor Glory, *John* 3. 8. 1.

They do not, nor can diſpoſe the ſoul, as that it may be thereby a fit ſubject to receive Grace: Thoſe actions which leave the ſoul under the power of ſin, and acted by 2.

by ſin, and a man in a Natural condition, thoſe ſtil leave the ſoul indiſpoſed to Grace; for *the Natural man perceives not the things of Grace, nor can he receive them*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. they found him in the world, and they leave him in the world, and *the world cannot receive the holy Ghoſt*, John 14. 17. Natural and corrupt actions, cannot prepare immediately for Supernatural Grace.

3. *There is no promiſe of giving ſaving Grace to ſuch, and none could ever be ſhewed.* That which ſomtimes the Arminians pretend, but preſs it with no great confidence, is in *Matth.* 25. 29. in the Parable of the Talents; *To every man that hath, ſhall be given; and to him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that he hath*: Hence, He that hath, and uſeth his Natural abilities wel, ſhal be given Supernatural. *Anſw.* That gloſs corrupts the Text, and doth not ſuit with the Scope and Circumſtances of the Parable, as hath been made good by many Arguments, by ſuch as have diligently ſearched into the ſence of the place. The unprofitable Servant that uſed not his Talents wel, he is to receive that Sentence, *he muſt be caſt into utter darkneſs*; which were it underſtood according to the former Opinion, it would infer an apparent falſhood. He that did not improve his Talent, was forthwith to be caſt into utter darkneſs; but many that do not uſe their natural abilities, and the ſpecial advantages wel, have been formerly, and wil without queſtion be brought home to Chriſt and happineſs, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Know ye not, that no Adulterer, Covetous Reviler, Extortioner, ſhal inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; but ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are clenſed.* 1 Pet. 4. 2. *It is ſufficient that in time paſt we have had our Converſation among the Gentiles, when we walked in laſciviouſneſs, luſts, exceſs of Riot, Revellings, and abominable Idolatries.* Theſe did not uſe their Natural abilities wel, and yet were not caſt out into utter darkneſs; the

therefore the using of the Natural abilities, is not the having, or the using of the Talent there meant. But I suppose the meaning of the Phrase is, *by him that hath*, is meant the man that is truly gracious; the *Talent* is the Gospel; by having, is the receiving and keeping of it in a good and honest heart, and the sanctified use of it in a saving manner. For the Evangelists Expressions seem undeniable to evidence this meaning, *Matth.* 13. 11, 12. When our Savior Christ had told his Disciples *it was given to them* (q. d. it's the peculiar special work of the Spirit of Grace in your hearts) *to know the mysteries of the Kingdom, but to them it is not given*; he ads the reason and proof in the next verse; for *to him that hath*, he that in sincerity entertains the Gospel shal have a further communication of the Truth, and sweetness of the Gospel to his soul; but *whosoever hath not*, whosoever entertains not the Gospel in truth and uprightness, *from him shall be taken away* the Gospel, which by a seeming profession of full-hearted, lazy entertainment he would seem to have, but never had in sincerity; the like connexion is found, *Mark* 4. 24, 25. *Take heed what you hear, and unto you that hear*, i.e. that do take heed what you hear *more shal be given*; *for to him that hath, shall be given*; *but he that hath not*, i.e. that doth not take heed what he hears, and so receives not the Word in sincerity, *from him shall be taken even that he hath.*

But if the saving work of the Word, doth not depend upon my endeavor, why should I endeavor any further, any longer, or attend the use of the means, or practice answerable thereunto? Object.

Thou thy self, and al thy services being in a natural estate, are as a menstruous cloth, both in themselves, and in the sight of Gods pure eyes, unanswerable to Gods mind, and the Rule of the Law, and therefore cannot save you; *yet thy sinful neglects, impudent and scornful contempt of the way and means of Grace, will undoubtedly* Answ. 1.

tedly damn thee: This is condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs more than light, John, 3. 17. *The Scribes and Phariſees deſpiſed the Counſel of God againſt themſelves*, Luke, 7. 30.

2. *The Law and Command was given to* Adam *in innocency, and to thee in him, to Husband all advantages, and to lay out thy ſelf in all thy ſufficiencies to advance Gods Name, and to do his will; to love him, and ſerve him with all thy mind, and with all thy might*; Matth, 22. 37. How ever thou beeſt changed, yet the Law is not changed; however thy ability is not the ſame, by reaſon of the wound thou haſt taken by original corruption, yet thy Duty is the ſame to this day. Gods will is done in Heaven, and ſhould be done in Earth. The Debtor that borrows the money, and ſtands bound to the Creditor to anſwer the Debt, though his ſtate alter, and he be impoveriſhed, and made unable to pay, yet his Bond for payment continues in full force againſt him, and he will be conſtrained to make it good.

3. Though all that thou canſt do, can neither prepare thee for Grace, nor purchaſe Grace for thy ſelf, *yet the means through Divine Inſtitution are mighty; God by them can work effectually, and if it ſeem good to his good pleaſure, he will; wait upon him only for that good thou wanteſt, from whom only it can be received.* As the Leapers in the time of the Famine reſolved to try what might be done by others for their ſafety, who could do nothing for themſelves. That is Gods way and means; try what God will do, in whoſe pleaſure it is to give, or deny. I might add what Divines ſpeak, and ſeaſonable alſo to the Point in hand. While thou art endeavoring as thou canſt, it leſſens thy ſin, and prevents further plagues, unto which thou wilt be ſubject, through Gods juſt Judgment, and thine own juſt deſerving. *Ahab*'s outward humiliation, prevented the temporal plague, though it did not free him from the eternal,

nal, 1 *Kings*, 21.29. *Seeſt thou how* Ahab *humbles himſelf, I will not bring the evil in his daies.*

A Patient that hath a Wolf in her Breaſt, and an inveterate Gout, knows neither can be recovered, yet both may be eaſed by uſe of Phyſick, and moderate Diet; and therefore he intends both. Caſt away the evil of your works, but keep your works ſtill; keep ſome Rules if thou canſt not keep all: better ſave one ſide of thy coat good, than both naught. If thou canſt not avoid al ſin, avoid as much as thou canſt.

Is it then beyond the power, and any poſſibility of man to attain Grace? *Object.*

Yes. It's not in man to direct his own way, Jer. 10. 23. It's beyond the power of a dead man to reſtore himſelf to life. And our Savior is expreſs and peremptory in giving Sentence in this caſe and his determination is concluſive, *Matth.* 19. 26. when he ſaid, *it's as eaſie for a Chamel to go through the eye of a needle, as for a rich man to be ſaved*: The Diſciples ask *Who then can be ſaved?* He returns this definitive Anſwer, *With man it is impoſſible, but with God all things are poſſible.* Look we at the power and performances of man, there is no ſufficiency nor poſſibility: for of our ſelves *we are not able to think a good thought*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. But if we look at the Almighty Power of God, there is nothing hard to him, who hath Hardneſs at Command. *Anſw.*

But is any man tied to impoſſibilities, and can any be puniſhed becauſe he doth not perform that which is impoſſible to him? Object.

Impoſſibilities are of two ſorts, 1. *Some are abſolute that exceed the compaſs of our being, or all that ability we ever received.* 2. *Impoſſibilities by ſuppoſition, which though the things be poſſible, yea, eaſie in their Nature, and with reference to their firſt order, and inſtitution*; yet by reaſon of ſome inconveniences, hindrances, weakneſſes which fall in beſide, and croſs to the Anſw.

courſe and conſtitution of things as they were at firſt; *that which formerly might eaſily have been compaſſed, there is in ordinary courſe no poſſibility to attain unto it.* And to ſuch impoſſibilities, a man may be juſtly tyed, and failing in his performances, may juſtly be puniſhed by the Law of Nature, Nations, right Reaſon, and the righteous Rule of God. The Debtor hath borrowed ſo much money, which he may improve, and is bound to repay at ſuch a day appointed; if he through his prodigality and riot, ſhal vainly miſ-ſpend, not only the Sum he borrowed, but his ſtock, a fair eſtate unto which he was born, ſo that it's now impoſſible to him, thus impoveriſhed to ſatisfie. May not the Creditor according to al the Rules of Right and Reaſon require his Money, & in the default of payment, puniſh or impriſon? No Nation ever queſtioned it. It was not only poſſible for *Adam*, but eaſie to love God above all; if he through his fall, hath brought impoſſibility of payment upon himſelf, the Lord may in Juſtice require it, and puniſh him for it. And certain it is, God juſtly may and doth deny Reprobates Grace; not only becauſe they do not what they may, but alſo becauſe they do that which through the corruption of their own hearts they cannot avoid: As namely becauſe of the *enmity of the wiſdom of the fleſh, they are not, nor cannot be ſubject to the Law*, and Righteous Will of God, *Rom.* 8. 7.

That for which God condemns the wicked, for that he denies them Grace and Glory: For Condemnation implies both, and cannot admit either. But they are condemned, not only becauſe they do not ſo much, but becauſe they did ſuch and ſuch Duties to falſe ends: not becauſe they did *not faſt and pray*, but becauſe they did both to a wrong end, to ſerve themſelves and luſts, and not to ſerve God: and yet they could not aim at Gods Glory as their laſt end. If for the not doing of ſuch Duties they ſhould and might do, they only want Grace,

Iſay, 58. 3,4,5,6.

Grace, then if they had done ſuch and ſuch according to their power (as they could) and improvement of their abilities, then they had receiv'd Grace undoubtedly, which hath been fully confuted by the former Arguments. To iſſue this Point, that we may fence our ſelves againſt ſo dangerous a conceit, let us take in, and ſtore our hearts with ſome ſaving Truths, as a Soveraign Antidote againſt ſuch falſhoods: and herein I ſhall not only ſpeak mine own Judgment, but the Judgment of all my fellow Brethren, as I have juſt cauſe, and good ground to beleeve, that ſo you may receive them as Truths under the Teſtimony of many Witneſſes.

Ballaſt therefore thy heart with the Concluſions following:

All men are by Nature, dead in ſins and treſpaſſes. 1.

A dead man can not prepare himſelf for life, much leſs hath power to procure it. 2.

The Lord in the Work of Converſion, doth not only by moral perſwaſion propound the Truths of the Goſpel, and enlighten the mind, but puts a principle into the heart of ſuch as he brings effectually and ſavingly home to himſelf. 3.

In this work of God, the Sinner at firſt is meerly patient. 4.

That men may receive this from God, every man is bound to wait upon him, in the means he hath appointed, and according to the utmoſt of his power, improve al abilities and advantages he hath. 5.

When any man hath improved his abilities to attend the means of Grace, neither hath uſed his ability to oppoſe, and cavil at the means, it's in Gods freedom to take either, or refuſe both, *for it is not in him that wils and runs, but in God that ſhews mercy*, Rom. 9. 16. 6.

COMFORT. *Here is ground of incomparable Encouragement, and in truth, of inconceivable Refreſhing to hold up the heads and hearts of the moſt wretched* Uſe, 2.

ched sinners in the most forlorn condition, able to shore and prop up the soul with some possibility of good, that it sink not down, and be swallowed up with desperate
Mat. 7. 6. discouragement. I am *almost afraid to cast such Pearls before Swine*: And when I do but think or suspect that any carnal wretch should abuse this kindness,
Jude, 4. *and turn this Grace of God into wantonness*; if it do not depend upon my doing, I will do nothing, let God do all. I am forced almost to bite in my words, and my heart almost misgives me, as loth to cast away such compassions of the Lord upon such hellish Varlets, who out of the venom of their Spirits would turn these choyce Preservatives into Poyson. Yet because it is like a piece of board left after the wrack when the Ship is broken, as the last means of relief; as a cord of compassion let fall amongst a company of poor perishing Creatures, ready to be over-whelmed with the floods of iniquity, and who knows but some may catch it at the last cast, before they go hence, and be seen no more. Let me therefore bequeath this Encouragement to you as my last Will, even the words of a dying man, before you and I appear before the dreadful presence of the Lord. Know then, you are yet in the Land of the Living, and bless God you are so; and know, because it's the will and pleasure of God to do good to some of the worst of men as he sees fit, therefore there is yet hope while there is life; some little peep-hole of hope, like a pins head, a possibility there is you may receive good. You see here how he prevails with the spirits of the most perverse, they have their hearts pierced, though it be against the hair and heart and all, even when they pierced and wounded the godly spirits of his poor Disciples: Let your hearts eccho then from every corner of the Assembly, *Pierce me, me also*; *Pardon me, me also*; *Humble me, me also*; through thy abundant goodness and good pleasure. If the sore be never so dangerous, and in appearance incurable; if the disease be never so deadly,

deadly, and in the apprehenſions of al, paſt help, If the Phyſitian and Chirurgion be known to have cured and helped in ſuch caſes, and that he yet lives; the patient wil yet ſupport himſelf with ſuch inferences, why may not my ſore be cured, my diſeaſe healed, ſo the Lord lives who hath done as much for forlorn ſinners and why not for me, poor wretched creature, ſay ſo, thou ſaieſt true.

This is the ſcope of Gods counſel and his very purpoſe why he leaves ſuch patterns of the freeneſs of his compaſſions, that yet forlorn creatures might look to him, from the depth of their moſt deſperate miſery. Let not the Lord fayl of his intendment, nor you of your comfort. 1 *Tim* 1. 16. *I was a Blaſphemer a Perſecuter and injurious howbeit for this cauſe I obtained mercy that in me firſt Chriſt Jeſus might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering for a pattern to them who ſhould hereafter believe on him to life everlaſting.* That they might hope ſtil for Good as he received it, and know they may be made partakers of it upon the ſame terms that he was, ſet the pattern of this compaſſion before your eyes, and ſee yet a poſſibility of relief. We ſhal ſever a little the particulars that each man may ſuit his own condition with that moſt concerns him, here is that which anſwers to every neceſſity and complaint.

One complaines his wants are ſo many, he cannot conceive how ever they ſhould be ſupplyed, another complains his ſpirit ſo perverſe, he knows not how it can be ſubdued, a third his rebellions ſo open, ſo groſſe againſt the Almighty & al the means of life, its impoſſible that ever the Lord ſhould paſs by ſuch helliſh provocations I confeſs al your complaints are juſt and weighty, your condition very dangerous. And let me tel you did your relief and help depend upon your preparations and performances or improvements, its certain your hearts and comforts and hopes would utterly fail and give up the Ghoſt. Here is the anchor of your hopes, that wherein

wherein your help lyes is here, and leave not this anchor-hold the Lord can do good and wil, againſt al indiſpoſitions and oppoſitions of ſpirit, & carriages to the contrary, as he ſees fit. And therefore thou mayeſt lift up thy head and ſay *then it may be to me* yea to thee never ſo weak, to the perverſe and rebellious. Attend what the Lord ſayes take his word and take it with thee.

Object. 1. Thou ſeeſt and confeſſeſt thy perſon baſer than the earth that bears thee, thy mind ful of blindneſs, ſtupidity, ſottiſh and unteachable; in the things of God, thou haſt heard ſo many able men, enjoyed ſo many means of conviction and information, and al hath ſlipt away like water ſpilt upon a rock, and why ſhould I think that ever I ſhould be convinced or inſtructed or any light ever ſet up in this *ſottiſh mind of mine.*

Anſw. True thou haſt been taught by men, and man and means have happily done their beſt, and truly they are nothing, and thou art nothing, and all that they and thou canſt do is nothing, *yea but they ſhal al be taught of God*, ſaies the text. *John*, 6. 45. Chriſt now in heaven did more by the Miniſtry of *Peter*, than in his bodily preſence he did, nay (go further than that) then his bodily preſence could do, though he ſpake as never man ſpak. No matter how dul thou art if God wil teach thee, how weak if God wil ſtrengthen thee. Be thy wants what they wil be or can be, the al-ſufficient God wants neither wiſdom nor power nor mercy to do what thou canſt need, and he wil, for thy good. And his power pitcheth his tent, and taketh pleaſure to ſhew it ſelf in weakneſs. Thou art fooliſh, *God chooſeth the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe.* 1. Cor. 1. 26. 27. Thou art nor any thing thou ſhouldſt be, God delights to *cal things that are not as though they were*, and therefore may cal and chooſ thee alſo. They are not only dry but *dead bones which the Lord makes to live* Ezek. 37. 2. can theſe dead bones live? they are not onely miſcarrying *but barren wombs which the*

the Lord makes to bear, and be fruitful. Not only when things are under hope but when there is nothing in preſent appearance or expectation then God can do it. *Rom.* 4. 24. when it is not onely beyond thy power and ability God can ſupport thee, and ſtrengthen thee, teach and quicken thee when it is beyond not thy apprehenſion, but thy very thought and hope; he hath done ſo, doth do ſo, he lives ſtil, and can do ſo to thee alſo.

Obj. 2. True my weakneſſes are many but thats not al, nor yet the worſt, the waywardneſs and perverſneſs of mine own heart ads the greateſt weight unto my miſery and wretchedneſs not onely deſtitute of any ſpiritual good, but not willing to be made better, *my brow as braſs and my neck like an iron and ſinew*, as the Lord complaynes, *Iſa.* 48. 4. My heart harder than the nether milſtone *Job.* 41. 28. If life and Salvation were laid before me and that I might have heaven and grace for taking or entertainment of it, yet I would neither have word, nor Chriſt nor heaven it ſelf unleſs I might have my wil in heaven, ſuch is the invincible ſtiffneſs and deſperate perverſneſs of my ſpirit; unleſs I may have what I wil when it comes upon the narrow, God muſt not have his glory, nor ſervice nor ſubjection nor alleagiance nor duty in the leaſt meaſure diſcharged. I muſt burn, for I can neither break nor yield: nor mercies perſwade me, nor judgments awe me, I can receive no good, nay I can ſee no reaſon why God ſhould do any good to me that would not have it.

Anſw. Here is the dead lift, and the wonder of al wonders, the overpowring of the ſoveraignty of a ſtubborn ſelf-willy heart, even the throne where Satan dwells; which ſhewes the doctrine of free-wil to be a doctrine of Devils and that which drives the ſoul to everlaſting diſcouragement, pretend what ſuch deceivers can to the contrary.

But the former doctrine affords ſupport, and that which wil bear up thy heart even in this particular alſo

thy Salvation depends not upon thine owne wil, for then neither thou nor any fleſh ſhould be ſaved. *But God ſhewes mercy to whom he wil ſhew mercy*, Rom. 9. 19. As nothing can deſerve his mercy ſo nothing can reſiſt his good pleaſure, when he wil ſhew it, he wil make thee find it and others ſee it. *James*, 1. 18. *of his own good wil begot he us by the word of truth*; It's not according to the wil of Satan, for then no man ſhould be ſaved, its not according to the wil of man fallen, for then no man could be ſaved. But he diſpenſeth the work of his grace according to his own wil *And his counſel ſhal ſtand, and he will do what he wil.* Iſai. 46. 11. let the wil of men and Devills oppoſe it to the utmoſt of their power. Quiet thou thy heart, I cannot do any thing that might purchas, nor yet in truth would I have grace if God would give it, only it is with God to do good to this miſerable ſoul of mine as he wil, who doth what he wil in heaven and in earth, his wil be done and bleſſed be his holy name for ever and ever: and there ſtay thy ſelf. It was the expreſſion of a man in heavy perplexity of Conſcience finding the croſneſs of his wil to ſnarl at the Lords diſpenſation, his heart ſunk within him, with unſupportable horror, that he had ſinned the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; and with many prayers and tears he ſought to heaven to bring his heart to an under ſubjection to the good pleaſure of the Lord, but the Lord left him to his own perverſneſs, nothing he could do, could prevail with his own ſpirit. and profeſſed againſt that curſed cavil of the Arminians, that reproach of the doctrine of Gods free grace which leads to deſpayr and diſcouragement, openly acknowledging that if his own ſalvation depended upon his own wil, he ſhould periſh irrecoverably: but that only held his heart in ſome hope that his happineſs was in Gods hand, and that it meerly depended upon the wil of the Lord, to give him a heart to fear and ſerve him: or elſe his heart would fayl. And it was a ſavory

ſpeech

ſpeech of a gracious woman that had a great deal of Do with her own heart, when ſhe could not find her heart to come off ſo willingly to give way as ſhe ought to what her judgment allowed, ſhe beſought the Lord to give her ſuch a diſpoſition of heart whether ſhe would or no.

Thou yet replyeſt, that which adds to the hainouſneſs of my evil is this, theſe loathſom diſtempers have not been harboured in mine own breaſt onely, confined in mine own boſom, which yet had been too much, but they have broken out into the moſt fierce and profeſſed rebellion and that in the higheſt degree. I have been a profeſſed oppoſer of the goſpel and the power thereof, an open *Rabſhekah*, a Ringleader and Encourager, to ſuch that would revile and reproach the righteous and good wayes of Gods grace, a jearing *Iſhmaelite*, of ſuch as with tenderneſs of Conſcience had care to walk therein, and have reſolved and attempted alſo even with an impudent face and a brazen forehead to outbrave the authority of the truth, and made it matter of ſcorn to drop and give in to the moſt dreadful threatnings, that could be denounced out of the word, I have trampled al the entreaties of the Lord and tender offers of mercy under feet, that when I have called over my courſe, and viewed my carriage in cold blood I have wondred that the Lord hath not made me a ſpectacle of his diſpleaſure, before I departed out of the place, that the very earth did not open and ſwallow me quick as *Corah Dathan* and *Abiram*. So that God cannot be God unleſs he do avenge himſelf and pluck the praiſe of his juſtice from the heart blood of ſuch a wretch, nay he ſhould be acceſſory to the diſhonor of his own name if he ſhould ſhew mercy to ſuch who openly, impudently in a helliſh haughtineſs of heart have trampled his mercy under their feet. *Obj.* 3.

True fleſh and blood could not do it, nay the heart of man cannot think it how this ſhould be, did wee meaſure *Anſw.*

ſure Gods compaſſions according to our narrowſcantling, but Gods thoughts are not ours nor his wayes ours, ſo far as the heavens are above the earth, ſo great is his mercy unto them that fear him. *Iſai.* 55. *Pſal.* 103. 11. infinitely above and beyond our own deſires and thoughts, our imaginations and expectations; They are I confeſs amazing expreſſions of miraculous compaſſions of the Lord, yet ſuch they are as he is pleaſed to manifeſt to ſinful duſt and aſhes. He can tel how to have the honor of his juſtice and to ſave thy ſoul, thou ſinful rebel. Nay he can tel how beſt to provide moſt for his own glory, when he pardons moſt ſins: *I beſeech thee pardon my ſins for they are many Pſal.* 25. 11. He lets the power of darkneſs proceed to its ful ſtrength, that the power of his exceeding mercy might ſhew it ſelf in delivering from the nethermoſt hell. He gives ſin advantage that it might do its worſt, and raign unto death, that ſo his grace might raign over ſin & death unto eternal life. According to the ſoveraignty of his wil *whereby he ſubdues al things to himſelf Eph.* 3. *laſt* and here thou mayeſt yet feel firm bottom to bear up thy fainting heart from ſinking down into everlaſting diſcouragement.

Thus you ſee the compaſs of this encouragement which iſſues from Gods free grace. But leaſt ſome proud fleſh ſhould ariſe by this healing preſervative if it ſhould heal too faſt to keep thee under this encouragement and yet to keep thee from preſumption take theſe Cautions.

Caut. 1. *It's poſſible God may do thee good, notwithſtanding all indiſpoſitions and oppoſitions. But know it for certain he never will do it but in his own way.* If he ſave thee he wil humble thee if he pardon that guilty ſoul and Conſcience of thine, he wil pierce both to the quick; there is not a poſſibility he ſhould ſave thy ſoul and thy ſin alſo, ſet it down for an undenyable concluſion I cannot have my ſtubborn and rebellious heart and

have

have any hope that ever I ſhal have either Grace or Mercy. If thou *wilt ſin that mercy may abound* (as the Apoſtle brings in the ſons of Belial, ſpeaking, *Rom.*6.1.) thou mayeſt have thy ſin, but upon theſe terms thou ſhalt never have mercy. Either expect that God ſhould take away thy ſin, or elſe never expect he ſhould prevent thy ruin.

2. When the Lord lets in ſome light to diſcover the loathſomneſs of thy corrupt Nature, and begins to grapple with thy Conſcience, ſo that thou ſtand'ſt convinced of the vileneſs of thine own waies, the worth and excellency of his Grace; when God hath thee upon the Anvil, and under the Hammer to break thee, in the fire to melt thee, *Oh fear, fear, leſt thou ſhould'ſt make an eſcape from under the hand of the Lord, and fall back again to the old baſe courſe*; it's a dreadful ſuſpicion of Gods direful diſpleaſure, leſt either the Lord wil ceaſe to do thee any further good; or give thee up to thoſe helliſh departures, that thou ſhouldeſt make thy ſelf everlaſtingly uncapable of mercy.

1. *It's a ſore ſuſpicion that the Lord purpoſeth to leave ſtriving, and to meddle with thee no more, when the Lord ſuffers thee to wind away from under the power of the means which formerly thou wert ſubject to.* It's Gods uſual manner to make ſuch unexcuſable, and never make them good, that they might go ſelf-condemned, and ſo go to Hell. It's that of the Prophet *Jeremy* which he makes a Symptom of the out-caſt condition of the Jews that they were droſs, *Jer.* 8. 30. *Reprobate Silver ſhall men call them, becauſe the Lord hath rejected them*: How proves he that? Verſe 29. *The Bellows are burnt, the Lead is conſumed in the fire, the Founder melteth in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away.* To this purpoſe is that of our Savior, when he had long ſtriven with the rebellious Jews, clocked to them as a Hen to her Chickens, and would have gathered them under the wing of his ſaving Providence, by

by the preaching of the Gospel and ye nothing would prevayl, they would drive Christ out of their sight, and he smites them with a plague answerable, *Math* 23. 2 *last. ver. ye shal see me no more, until ye shal say blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.* And this his word hath taken hold upon them unto this day, the poor forlorn Jewes have not had a sight of Christ this sixteen hundred yeers, scriptures they have, prophecyes, promises, yea they have the Gospel while they refuse the Gospel, for so the Apostle *Gal.* 3. *The Gospel was preached to Abraham saying in thy seed shal al the Nations of the earth be blessed*, they see al this but the vayl is over their eyes, they see no Christ in promises, ordinances and therefore no salvation, leaving secret things to God. So it befals many falsharted Apostates when God hath had them in the fire and they come out too hastily from horror and humiliations, before half melted, Its a great adventure they never come to Christ, but wanse away in a powerless kinde of formality and content themselves with the enjoyment of some outward priviledges and ordinances and names of profession, they have the scriptures and ordinances but never see a Christ, in any of them, nor wil the Lord look upon them, nor once speak to them, when he passeth by, but let them live and perish as heartless, Christless men. Thus our savior dealt with his people in former times when he had sent the spyes into the Land of Canaan, *Heb.* 3. 18. *Numb.* 14. 23. and they returned convinced by their own experience of the goodness of the land as flowing with milk and honey, and out of a slothful cowardice because there were iron Charrets and walled cities, and mighty Giants, they withdrew the duty and Gods charge, and disheartened also the people, the text sayes *the Lord sware in his wrath they should not enter into his rest.* When God swears, it shewes his purpose is unchangable and his execution wil not be altered. Canaan is a type of the Kingdom of grace and so

ſo of Glory when the Lord let in ſome evidence of the excellency thereof and the heart cannot but acknowledg it, yet leaves off rather than it wil take the paynes to grapple with thoſe Giant-like corruptions, that iron and flinty hardneſs of heart, why ſhouldeſt not thou fear leaſt God ſhould ſwear thou ſhalt never enter into his reſt, thou ſhouldeſt never find the power of the death of Jeſus in killing the body of death, ſo that thou ſhouldeſt ceaſe from thine own works, and from the ſinful diſtempers of thy corrupt heart.

Secondly.

Fear again, leſt the Lord give thee up to thy old diſtempers, that thou ſhould'ſt make thy ſelf everlaſtingly uncapable of any good, and ſin that unpardonable ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt. When thou goeſt againſt thoſe Convictions of thy Conſcience, thoſe taſts of approbation which ſometimes thy heart took in the good Word and waies of God; for by this back-ſliding thou art in the ready way to run upon that rock. This was that which helped *Paul* the poſſibility of mercy, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. *But I obtained mercy, becauſe I did it ignorantly*, it was his zeal that he perſecuted the Church, *i.e.* his blind zeal; but ſhould he have done ſo againſt the Dictates of his Conſcience, and the evidence of Truth in his own heart, he could hardly have ſeen a way for mercy. So the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, 6. 8. *The Earth that often drinketh in the rain, and yet brings forth thorns and bryars is nigh*, is nigh unto curſing, *whoſe end is to be burned.* The rain is the Word, heard, underſtood, embraced, acknowledged, and yet have their malicious venemous conſpiracies againſt the Goſpel of God, and Saints of Chriſt, and that in ſecret like thorns under the leaves, like bryars under pretence of moderation and humility, can ſcratch bitterly, it's a heavy ſuſpicion their end wil be burning. Take heed thou content not thy ſelf in thy rebellious condition; for upon this ſuppoſition that thou wilt have this, thou putteſt thy ſelf out of any poſſibility of good, goeſt againſt Gods Order,

Order, Course, and Covenant, and the whol Work of Redemption, *Christ comes to bless his by turning them away from their sins*, Acts, 3. last; and therefore when the Lord comes to hale thee out of thy sins, take heed thou dost not go from under Gods strivings, lest he strive with thee no more.

Use 3. EXHORTATION. *We have hence special motives to quicken the desires, and provoke the endeavors of the most carnal minded men in the world, to attend with all the care and diligence they may upon the means of Grace.*

Object. But you wil tel us, It is not in our Preparations, Performances, and Improvements, that our Spiritual good depends, there is nothing we can do can procure it, it depends wholly upon the good pleasure of the Lord; *Why then should we trouble our selves to endeavor any thing?*

Answ. I Answer, *The Inference is the quite contrary way: All is in God and his good pleasure, attend therefore upon him in his own means, that thou mayest receive al from him.* If a man should reason thus: I can do nothing for my self, therefore I wil take a course that no man shall do any thing for me; it were not a weakness, but a kind of madness; but rather in common sence a man would be provoked to press his own heart thus; I can do nothing of my self, therefore I must attend upon God in those means which he useth to do for all those he useth to do good unto. So the Disciples to our Savior when he would arm them against his departure, *Will ye also go away?* John, 6. 68. *They answer, Lord, whither should we go? thou only hast the words of eternal life.* Christ only can humble and convert, Christ only hath peace and pardon, therefore only go to him. We are so wise for our bodies, where one is most like to speed, every man is most willing to go, especially considering as nothing can purchase his favor, so nothing can hinder the expression of his good pleasure when he wil,

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go therefore what ever thy condition is. When thou art at the weakeſt, here is ſupply: As he ſaid, *Why ſtand you gazing, fainting, and famiſhing? get ye into* Egypt *for Corn, that we may live, and not die*: though thou liveſt in the height of the perverſneſs of thy heart, in the out-rage of thy rebellion, though thou carrieſt a ſcornful contemptuous ſpirit with thee, yet go; who knows when is Gods time, what he may do? bring your own ſouls, your rebellious Servants, and diſobedient Children, fall down at the foot of Chriſt in his Ordinances, and ſay, Here are a company of Helliſh, Traitrous hearts, which bring proud, ſtubborn, ſcornful, rebellious diſtempers, like ſo many bloody weapons, even to wound thy good Majeſty withal; Oh pluck theſe weapons out of our hands, theſe treaſons out of our hearts, that would pluck us to thee, and ſo to deſtruction. As we cannot deſerve any thing, ſo our wretchedneſs cannot hinder thy Work. *Gen.* 42. 1, 2.

And becauſe thou knoweſt not the ſeaſon of mercy, take al ſeaſons, thou knoweſt not what time God may or wil work; becauſe it is in his own pleaſure, therefore attend upon him at al times, 2. *Tim.* 2. 25. *Proving if at any time God will give thee Repentance.* 1.

Attend upon him in all Ordinances; becauſe it is in his pleaſure to breath in which he wil, and to bleſs which he wil for thy Spiritual Comfort. *Sow thy Seed in the morning, and in the evening, becauſe thou knoweſt not which may proſper, this or that*, Eccleſ. 11. 6. Thou knoweſt not whether Prayer, or Meditation, or Reading wil proſper, and which of theſe, or any other Ordinance God wil bleſs for the ſaving good of thy ſoul. 2.

When thou findeſt the Lord ſtirring, moving, enabling, and working in thee, move thou, and work thou alſo: As the Marriner when he finds the gale coming any way, he tacks about each way to take the advantage. God was tampering with the heart of *Agrippa*, it was at a ha, now a ha, *Thou haſt almoſt perſwaded me to be-* 3.

come a Chriſtian, ſaies he to *Paul*, Acts, 26. 28. Ah what a pity was it he ſhould fal back again.

Uſe 4. *It's matter of wonderment able to ſwallow up the heart of a ſinner with the everlaſting admiration of this unconceivable, unmatchable kindneſs of the Lord.* Micah, 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneſt iniquity, and paſſeſt by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his Heritage: He retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy; he will turn again, he will have compaſſion upon us; he will ſubdue our iniquities, and thou wilt caſt all their ſins into the depths of the Sea.* You that have taſted how good the Lord is, and found this Truth made good in your own hearts by your own experience; as *Paul* was wont to recount his courſe, *I was a perſecuter, blaſphemous and injurious, but I obtained mercy.* I doubt not but many of you may ſay, if ever there was a Fiend in Hell, or a Rebel upon Earth, I was one; an oppoſer of the Goſpel, a deſpiſer of the means of Grace, a hater of the holy waies of the Lord, and his ſervants that walk therein: yet then God did me good, when I deſired and endeavored my own hurt. Get ye home ye bleſſed Saints, and in the ſecret of your Cloſets cal Heaven and Earth together, and leave theſe compaſſions upon Record. Say, the time was this carnal mind of mine plotted my wretched contrivements, and mine own ruin, but then the Lord prevented both; I oppoſed his entreaties, and he yet purſued me, and would take no nay; he called after me, wept over me, *Turn ye, turn ye, why will you die?* I provoked him, he pitied me; I reſiſted him, he imbraced me; I ſaid I would have none of him nor his Grace, he ſaid he would have no denial; I reſolved to walk on in the frowardneſs of mine own heart, and to periſh in the deſpight of al means, and he would and did ſhew me mercy in the deſpight of the pride and rebellion of this heart, or elſe I had never

1 *Tim.* 1 15, 16.

Ezek. 33. 11.

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ſeen this day, nor never had hope to ſee his face in glory. Be aſtoniſhed and confounded at this, O ye Devils, and come down ye bleſſed Angels from Heaven, and magnifie this mercy. Leave this in your laſt will and teſtament to your little ones, O ye Fathers; leave this as a pattern of compaſſions to all enſuing Ages, that they may love this God, and fear this God, &c.

They were pierced in their hearts.

The perſons have been conſidered in thoſe reſpects which were material and ſuitable to the aim of the Text: We are now come to enquire of the Work it ſelf, that is termed here *piercing*. 2. The place or ſubject in which this was, *it was in their hearts*. *Pierced*] The word in the Original is a compound, and implies more than bare pricking; nor have we any Engliſh word fit to expreſs it. *A ſhivering and pulling all aſunder*; for it is ſo to prick as to pierce and enter, dig on every ſide, to pierce not overly, but quite through the ſoul, as ſome of the Antients render it. It's found only in this place in the new Teſtament, though the Seventy Interpreters uſed it often in the Old, in the tranſlating of ſeveral words in ſeveral places, according to the intendment thereof. But that is remarkable, that the Hebrew Root which they ſomtimes expreſſed by the word in this place, it ſignifies ſuch a kind of piercing as when the body of a travelling woman is wounded with the ſorrow of Child-birth, when the Child is ſevered from the Womb, and brought into the world. And it uſually implies as here, a work of ſound ſorrow laid upon the ſoul, whereby ſin and the ſoul come to be parted each from other. And this reſemblance and ſimilitude between this Spiritual Sorrow and piercing, ſtands in three Particulars.

Cyprian tranſpunctio.

1. Piercing and digging, is ever grievous and tedious to the part that feels it.

2. There is a looſning and parting of thoſe things which were united and cloſed before, there is *diſſolutio continui*, as the Phyſitian ſpeaks; the parts that were firm and continued, become now to be parted and ſevered more or leſs one from another.

3. By this ſevering and ſundring the parts, there is a way and a paſſage made, that corruption, or any other humor which was in the part may be drawn out. So in ſound ſorrow, there be three things anſwerably.

1. The ſoul comes to be wounded and pained extreamly with the preſſure of corruption, ſtung with thoſe diſtempers which ſtab and torment the heart.

2. Hence the curſed union betwixt ſin and the ſoul comes to be looſened, when the ſinner cannot find that ſweetneſs in his luſts which have ſuited with him ſo exceedingly in former times. When this ſweetneſs like the ſoder by which the heart and corruption lay couched ſo neer, and ſo incorporate as it were, that they became one continued thing, is as I may ſay, by this prevailing ſorrow, melted and removed; the knot and combination between our hearts and our luſts, come to be broken.

3. Hence there is way made for the letting out of thoſe corruptions unto which the ſoul was endeared formerly, and the ſinner brought from under the ſupream and ſoveraign commanding power of his diſtempers. Thus the Church converted in *Hoſ.* 2. 8. when they had ſought their Lovers, and could not find them, followed them, and could not overtake them, they begin to take up other thoughts, *I will go to my firſt Huſband, for it was better with me then, than now.*

Heart.] It properly ſignifies that chief part in a mans Body, wherein the Fountain of the Vital Spirits lies; that which lives firſt (as they ſay) and dies laſt; that's the Natural ſignification. But here it's Spiritually underſtood, and it's put for *the Will and Affections,*

Affections, which have their proper place of abode there, and expreſs their ſpecial Operations in a principal manner, according as Objects are preſented, and occaſion offered: And thus it's taken in this place (not to trouble you with other variety of apprehenſions) thus you ſhal find it frequently in the Scripture; *The heart ſhal fear*, Deut. 28. 67. *Joy of heart*, Iſa. 65. 14. *Sorrow of heart*, Levit. 26. 16. &c. And *out of the heart comes murders and adulteries*, Matth. 15. 19. All which carry undeniably the work of the Will and Affections, according as they put forth ſeveral Operations as they meet with ſeveral Objects. So that this was not a ſlight and overly ripling of the skin, but a piercing to the quick, reached unto the very heart-root, that which cut aſunder the Soveraignty of the choyce of the Will, and made that ſtand back, and go off from thoſe loathſom corruptions, which were as neer as the ſoul to the ſoul; and they were all pricked as one man in the one and the ſame manner in the heart; they were al wounded, as though there had been but one heart in them all. Hence we ſhal propound divers Points, and purſue that which is the main.

Sins unrepented of, and continued in, make way for piercing and perplexing terrors. Doct.

I ſay, *unrepented, and continued in*, make way for terror. They do not alwaies immediately let in Gall and Wormwood into the Soul, preſently after the acting of them; plagues are then in preparation, and only thoſe over-bearing and dreadful Judgments which the Lord is deviſing againſt the ungodly, are then in the birth, and the Lord will not bring them forth until they be come to their full growth, as the fitteſt time for the execution of his vengeance. It fares with ſinners, as it doth ſomtimes, and for the moſt part with Malefactors; they

they make an escape from the hand of Justice, and they please themselves in the practice of their wickedness, and contenting their own lusts, until their destruction surprize them so, as they cannot avoid it, nor bear it. Had you but seen these scorners and despisers of our Savior formerly, when they run riot in their out-rage and opposition, carried all before them, as if they had the world at will, *Away with him, away with him; not Christ, but* Barrabbas. You would have conceived, nay, if thou had'st asked themselves, they would have concluded, they had been beyond all gun-shot, terrors and perplexities could not have touched, much less seized upon them. Yet see them here, and see how their condition is altered; they who scorned the Apostles, now come trembling to them; they who cared not what they did before, now are at their wits ends which way to turn themselves; and it's certain, the fire was then making, which now scorched; the sins were then committed, which now sunk their hearts with unsupportable horrors. There be *pleasures of sin*, but they are but *for seasons*, Heb. 11. 25. and those are but the Seed times of Sorrows and Judgments. *Joy is sown for the Righteous*, and sometimes in deep sorrows; the longer it is growing and ripening, the larger is the Harvest of Comforts. So troubles and horrors, hellish and heart-breaking amazements, are sown for the wicked, and that in their greatest delights; and the longer these are in growing and ripening, their Harvest of Horrors of Conscience will be out of measure dreadful. As the Prophet to those who carried al before them in their sinful contrivement, *Jer.* 5. last, *The Prophets prophesie falsly, the Priests bear Rule by their means, and the People love to have it so*; all wel met: *But what will you do in the end thereof?* They might have answered, We do what we list: Yes, for the while; but what wil be the end? So *Job*, 20. 12, 13, 14. *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, and though he hide it under his tongue,*

Psal. 97. 11.

tongue, though he spare it and forsake it not, yet his meat is turned in his bowels it's the gal of aspes within him. Revel. 18. 7. *how much she hath glorifyed her self and lived deliciously so much torment and sorrow give her.* James, 1. 12. *When lust hath conceived it brings forth death*; when lust is conceiving then terror is hatching.

The reason is in a word. *The heart comes to be more estranged from God the God of peace and comfort, and therefore terror and astontshment is now in the mint and preparation for them.* The heart grows more hard as it growes more secure in the continuance of evil, so more unfit and uncapable either of mercy offered, or of the benefit and saving good of any means that are provided by the Lord. And therefore the condition is more dreadful when it comes aright to be discovered, and the plagues more unsufferable when they come indeed to be executed upon them or threatned against them A rankling sore is hardly cured, and with much heart smart when it is. Surfeit of long continuance is recovered with much difficulty 1 *Sam* 12. 19. that which they would not acknowledg and reform before is now most dreadful, pray for us to the Lord that we dye not *for we have added to al our sins this evil of asking a King.* Gen. 42. 21. The brethren of *Joseph* when their cruel dealing came but into their remembrance how did it cut their hearts? *wee are verily guilty concerning our Brother, his blood is required at our hands.* *Reas.*

Learn we therefore not to judge the condition of a sinner, or the content of a sinful course, according to the present delights which they seem to take or the pleasing sweetness they pretend they find, in the wayes of wickedness. With which they are so far deceived and their carnal and deluded hearts are so far taken aside and ravished as it were, that they think it, nay conclude it, there is neither heaven nor happiness to be compared thereunto and such a suddain glitter dazles the eyes many times *Use.*

ny times of the Lords dear ones, when they looke upon the painted appearance of things, as at the present push they come presented and beautified with the trappings of pleasure and profit & ease, and honourable hearts contents *Psal.* 73. 2. *This made* Asaphs *foot almost slip and turne aside from* the righteous and good wayes of Gods grace, while he was deceived with the present pomp of the proceedings of the wicked men. Yea he professed that not only he stumbled but many were wholy taken aside with this delusion, *Psal.* 73. 10. *Many come hither i.e.* side with the society of the wicked *because ful cups of water are* administred to them and a confluence of outward and present comforts are cast in upon them. The cure he himself found when he went into the Sanctuary and also prescribes it unto others; namely *when he beheld the end of those men*, vers. 17. and those their wayes what wil be the end of cozening and reproching, lying and dissembling, that is the way to judg aright of sinful proceedings, and the certain way not to be deceived by them. Look not upon *the rich man as he fares deliciously every day*, but look at him as he is frying and scorching in flames and herein crying *Oh Father Abraham, let Lazarus dip but the tip of his finger to cool my scorching tongue*, when he obtaynes not a drop of water, whereas poor *Lazarus* is at a feast in *Abrahams* bosom. Look not at *Judas* as plotting with the scribes and pharisees and prospering in his purpose, as pleasing himself in his project and pocketting *his thirty pieces*. This is but for a season but stay a while, and turn aside a little, and see how he is forced to vomit out his morsel, and in hellish horror to roar out his wretchedness, *I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.* and follow yet further and see his end, he ends his dayes and his comforts together, his covetousness continued in so long before, prepared a halter for his ruin. Look not upon *Corah Dathan* and *Abiram*, when they ruffle it out in the pride of their

Luke, 16 19. 24.

Matth. 27. 3.

hearts

hearts, and out-brave *Moses*, and the authority of his place, ye take too much upon you, ye sons of *Aaron* but see *the Earth open and swallow him and his company of rebells* and al the people flying and crying *least we perish also.* *Num.* 16. 31. 32. 33.

It is one (and not the least) part of the power of the redemption of our Saviour that he gave himself for us, that he might *deliver us from this present evil world. Gal.* 1. 4. not because world only, or evil alone, but from the presentness of it, to deliver and free our hearts & apprehensions, from the two much attending and false conceiveings of those present appearances of these false lying vanities; we cannot judg amiss if we look at the end of Godly men, and a Godly life, not at the present inconveniences that are light and momentary which do attend them. *Psal.* 37. 37. *Consider the upright and mark, the end of that man is peace.* Perplexed he may be but his end is, he wil be pardoned, ful of doubts and distractions but his end is to be settled and quieted for ever, *you have heard of the patience of Job, and of the end that the Lord made with him,* judg that wel, and you wil not miss to judg aright, *James.* 5. 11. see what end sin and a sinful course make and then you wil not pass sentence amiss.

It wil be our greatest comfort and should be our greatest care to rise presently from our fals and recover our souls without delay, from such failings with which we are many times overtaken. our first care should be not to sin, our next care, not to continue in it if we be surprised therewith. A green wound is easily and successefully cured in an ordinarie course, when your old rankled sores hardly admit of any recovery. When the member is sprayned or out of joynt, to delay or neglect to set it, and that with most speed, its likely never to grow strong, bnt almost impossible it should be made streight, deal so with thy heart in the work of seasonable and sound repentance, for there is the like danger. better *Use* 2.

ter we judg our sin, than that we should be judged yea condemned for them, better we begin with speed to see our evills, and lye in the way to seek for mercy, than that our careless security should make way and preparation to hasten piercing and overbearing plagues. It were to be wished we should never be taken aside or plucked away with false fears, to speak hastily and by unbelief basely to deny the Lord Jesus, and his righteousness, but if we have fayled and that shamefully as *Peter*, *go out immediately, and weep with him bitterly for our* base departures. *Math.* 26. *last* the Lord bears not a fearless continuance in any distemper, if *David* bed it securely in base lusts, the Lord wil break his bones for it. *David* therefore takes himself here, no sooner sees God withdrawing, but he seeks him with instancy and importunity, *Psal.* 30. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Use 3. It's a word *of* TERROR *and astonishment to such who adventure to continue in their sinful distempers, because they never found so much as a touch of any terror in their souls for any of those distempers, they have continued in.* know such must assuredly, that sin is of the same poysonful nature as ever, and the word as true, and God as just as ever; and therefore their sins they have continued in have al this while made way for overbearing perplexities, which they wil certainly bring upon your souls; the less you have felt therefore the more you may expect, and without doubt you shal find and receive. There is *wrath to come*; *tribulation and wrath and anguish wil be and must be upon the soul of every man that sins*; if you had none as yet, there is the more behind; when those noysom abominations that have so long nestled in thy bosom, and there lyes as it were in ambush, wil march in upon thee like armed men, and sink your hearts in everlasting discouragements; cozen not therefore your selves with the present content you seem to find in your corruptions that you can trample upon Christ his ordinances and servants,

1 *Thes.* 1. *last.* *Rom.* 2. 9.

Servants, go away with it, without any trouble or controul. See these poor creatures and consider their condition what it was and now is, they stuck not to profess open rebellion against our Savior, *Away with him, crucify him*, and they carried al before them, with a high hand and so continued, from the Passover to Pentecost many weeks together, the poyson of their sins that pleased their spirits so much in the practice of them now beginns to work trembling and astonishing confusion unto their souls *the pleasure of sin is but for a season*, and when that is gone look for the like gall and wormewood. As it is in the body while the impostume and gross humors are gathering, the party finds no matter of grief, until at last when it comes to a ful growth and breaks suddenly, and proves present death that cannot be prevented, and then al the filth and impostumate matter issues out of the ears and mouth and each man can see it, when no man can help it. It is so with a canckered Conscience and a corrupt heart who hath hugged and harbored his distempers with pleasure and content & so continued. Until the Lord break open the conscience and then those hideous abominations let in the dreadful terrors of the Almighty, which overwhelm the soul of a sinner with unsupportable horrors; the Apostle thus concludes it peremptorily. *Gal.* 6. 7. 8. *be not deceived, God is not mocked, as ye sow, so you must reap, if you sow to the flesh, of the flesh you shal reap corruption* it may be your ruin is growing but not ripe, the harvest of horror is not yet come, but be not deceived God is not mocked you shal reap and your crop wil be confusion and perdition, the Lord himself hath so revealed it. *Deuter.* 32. 35. *in due time their foot shal slide.* Stay but the time, yea he determines it fully as that which he wil not fayl to accomplish, *Deutr.* 29. 20. 21. *When men bless themselves*, and bear up their heads bravely against al the peal of plagues that were rung in their ears, the Lord resolves upon it, his anger

shal smoak against that man to cut him off from the land of the living &c.

Pierced.

As their sins made way for this terror, so the word set it on. hence,

Doct. *The truth is terrible to a guilty Conscience when it prevailingly takes place there.*

It's a hammer that breaks, a fire that scorcheth, an axe sharp and keen that cutts and wounds the soul of a wicked, unrepentant sinner. *Acts.* 7. 54. *When they heard these things they were cut to the heart.*

Reas. *Because it is a witness to accuse, a judg to condemn, an executioner to torment such poor creatures,* as I might make al these good in particulars, it's sayd *Rev.* 11. 10. *That when the two witnesses were slayn, the inhabitants of the earth, solaced themselves and sent gifts one to another, because those that tormented them that dwelt upon the earth were taken away.*

Use. Matter of trial, those who are careful hearers may without fayl discover their condition, by the word that is dispensed. Art thou sick of the saving dispensations of the holy and righteous wil and law of God, thou sits and shakest under it as that which passeth the doom and sentence upon thee, which thou art not able to endure nor avoyd, do not cozen thy self with any vain conceivings of thy estate, or please and delude thy heart with the mistaken apprehensions and approbations of other men, it's certain thy heart is naught and condition also. If thou best sick of the truth, canst not side with it, nor receive approbation from it, when it comes in the strength and terror of it. As we say of men that

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are ſick at Sea, the cauſe is not in the tempeſt but in the ſtomack, becauſe there be corrupt and noyſom humors there, it's thoſe that raiſe ſtir and trouble in the ſtomack and not the ſtorm, when the ſtomach is purged and clear, the paſſenger can ſleep in the moſt tempeſtuous Seas, So it is where the heart is truly emptied and the Conſcience purged from dead works, the ſharpeſt truths would find moſt welcom and entertainment. *Heb.* 9. 14.

But doth not the truth carry terror with it and that even the beſt tremble at it? *Object.*

It's true they do ſo but with a double difference.

The word though it ever ſpeaks againſt the corruptions of thoſe that are ſincere hearted, *yet it ever paſſeth ſentence on their ſides both for the acceptation of their perſons and the happineſs of that condition they are in through grace*, and if it appear other to them, it is becauſe their judgments are darkned through temptations, miſguided through ſome miſtakes. 2. *Micah.* 7. *Are not my words good to them that walk uprightly.* Iſai. 3. 10. *Say to the righteous it ſhal go wel with them.* The Lord and his word ſayes no other, no man ought to ſay any other, *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt.* Rom. 8. 1. but it's otherwiſe with the wicked. The word not onely condemns their ſins but their perſons alſo. Becauſe they are one with their ſins and incorporate into them, and carryed with the power of them. *Iſai.* 3. 12. *Say to the wicked, wo unto them, for the reward of their evil works ſhal be given to them.* *Anſ.* 1.

The Saints of God ever find ſweetneſs in the ſharpeſt and moſt keen threatnings, and their hearts tremble at them becauſe the diſpleaſure of God is there, yet cheerfully ſubmit to them & cloſe with God in them, they take them as potions to cure the corruptions in them, not to kil them, and therefore take comfort in them, and they wilfully ſay, *the word of the Lord is Good*, and hence 2.

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are desirous to hear al, to know the worst, and the whol mind of God so *Ely.* 1 *Sam.* 3. 17. *hide nothing from me*, that which wounds most deep and works most kindly he welcomes it with a glad heart, because he knowes his welfare is there. Whereas a fals heart flyes from the terror of the truth, *Math.* 19. 22. *He went a way sorrowful, they say to the seers see not, and to the prophets, prophecy not right things but smooth things.* Isai. 30. 10 He is loath to hear what his heart doth not like, and willing to put by the power and darken the evidence of the truth, that appears dreadful to him by reason of his sins.

Come we now to the main Observation, wherein the pith of this spiritual truth consists and thats in two things.

1. *Gross and scandalous sinners God usually exerciseth with heavy breakings of heart before he bring them effectually to himself.*
2. *Sorrow for sin when it's rightly set on, pierceth the heart of the sinner through, that is rightly affected therewith.*

To the First.

Doct. *Gross and scandalous sinners God usually exerciseth with heavy breakings of heart before he bring them effectually to himself.*

These desperate wretches who had embrewed their hands in the blood of the Lord Jesus, and now in an impudent manner set themselves, to out-brave the servants of

of Christ, and his Word and Ordinances also: the Lord he handles them roughly, suitable to their rebellious carriages towards him; they had pierced the Body of our Savior, and exercised his soul with unsupportable sorrows; he pierced their hearts, they openly and impudently professed their cruel and accursed rage, *not him, but* Barabbas; *Crucifie him, crucifie him.* He forceth them to proclaim the loathsomness of this their way, in the view of the world: they before the multitude, scorned the Apostles; he forceth them now in the face of the people, to reverence and acknowledg them as the dear Servants of God. The Lord knows how to deal with men, answerable to their sinful dealings with him, and the distempers of their hearts, and doth thus with scandalous ones, and not only those whose lewdness and wickedness lies open to the view of the world, but with such also who are many times more retired, and carry it more cunningly and closely from the eyes of men, if yet their evils be gross, in which they live and lie; as such which oppose the light of Reason, the Dictates of Conscience, the remainder of those common Principles which are left in the corrupt Nature of men; as murder, theft, forgeries, adulteries, though molewarp-like they carry it never so secretly, dig deep to hide their counsel, and contrivement from God and man, yet commonly God breaks open their Conscience, breaks in with dreadful terror upon such, plucks those sweet morsels out of their maws, and constrains them to vomit out those bosom abominations by open confession after one manner or other, to some one or many. I say, it's Gods usual manner so to deal, with such, which implies he may deal so with others, but usually so with these.

Not that he may not, nay sometimes deals not so with others, whom by the strokes of his restraining Grace, he hath preserved and kept untainted from such loathsom abominations, and refined by a civil and comely fashion and carriage.

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If either he purpoſe to uſe them as choyce Inſtruments in his hand, and improve them in ſome ſpecial Service to ſet forth and promote his own praiſe, as men uſe to ſeaſon their Timber more than ordinary, if they intend to uſe it in ſome more than ordinary Service; and when they mind to raiſe the building marvelous high, they commonly, according to a courſe of prudence, lay the Foundation exceeding low.

2. *Or if the Lord intends to manifeſt himſelf to the ſoul of a ſinner with ſome raviſhing ſweetneß, with enlarged and amazed communications of the aſſurance of his Love, Joyes unſpeakable and glorious*: It's ordinary with the Lord to abaſe the heart exceedingly under the dreadful apprehenſions of it's own vileneſs, that it may be the more fitted to receive ſuch ſpecial comforts, not to ſurfet with them by ſecurity and pride: Great Revelations have great Humiliations go before them; the Eb is very low before the Tyde come with greateſt ſtrength and height; otherwiſe the ſoul would never be able to bear ſuch over-bearing expreſſions of Gods Love, and communications of himſelf, but would certainly abuſe them. If the Keel of the Boat were little and narrow, a large Sail would over-turn it, not convey it to the Haven. Great Aſſurances and glorious Joyes, are too great a Sail for a heart that is not widened with enlarged contritions and humiliations. God would make *Job* a pattern of Patience, to all poſterities, therefore he exerciſeth him with all extremities in all kind of ſharp and piercing ſorrows, and heavy deſertions.

James. 5. 11. *Job.* 1. 12. *Job.* 2. 4

The Lord ſhakes the heart of *Iſaiah* in the ſence of his own unworthineſs, *Wo is me* (ſaies he) *I am undone, I am a man of polluted lips*; before he would reveal unto him thoſe hid Propheſies concerning the Diſpenſation of his diſpleaſure amongſt the Nations, and thoſe myſterious depths of the glad tidings of the Goſpel, which were kept ſecret from the beginning of the world. *Paul* is *buffeted with fierce aſſaults by the ſplinter in the*

Iſa. 6. 5.

2 *Cor.* 12.

fleſh,

fleſh, that he might not be too much lifted up by Revelations, that he might know he was not yet in the third Heavens, but in the mid'ſt of a hurry of diſtempers, and a Hell of Devils. Theſe are but ſome exempt caſes, and that in ſome perſons for ſome ſpecial ends. But with groſs and ſcandalous perſons it's Gods uſual way ſo to deal, not that he is tyed, or hath tied himſelf to this manner of dealing upon neceſſity, but that he hath expreſſed it to be his good pleaſure ſo to diſpenſe himſelf to ſuch notorious rebels, as that way which beſt ſuits the Counſel of his own wil, and the attaining his own end, his glory, and their beſt good; and if ever he make an exemption for cauſes beſt known to his own bleſſed Majeſty in bringing ſuch unto himſelf that he deals tenderly with them at the firſt, it wil hardly ever be found, but they taſt moſt dreadful terrors afterwards, when happily they leaſt ſuſpected them, and yet are made better able to bear them. When the Delivery hath been ſpeedy, the after-throws have been many and hazardful many times: If ſuch men get ſomwhat an eaſie bargain at firſt, there be hard penny-worths, heavy after-claps they meet withal beyond their expectation, and it commonly never fails. The Rule is general the Prophet delivers touching Gods Diſpenſation, and I know not but it may hold here, *Pſal.* 18. 27. *With the froward thou wilt deal frowardly*, the place is hard for the apprehenſion of it in the fair and full ſence of it. The words that go before will give in ſome light; *With the bountiful thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf bountiful*; *with the perfect thou wilt be perfect*; *with the pure, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf pure*; *and with the perverſe or froward, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf froward*; thou wilt make thy ſelf deal frowardly. To ſpeak to the pinch of the Point but in two words. I conceive this to be the meaning of the place, and the mind of God in it. He that walks with God in the exercise of the Rule in a right manner, God will meet with him in it, and give him the ſweet and comfort that

follows and flows from it: he that conscienciously keeps the Rule, shal be more fitted for to keep it, and to share in the blessing and comfort of it: he that *deals bountifully* in vertue of the Rule, he shal be more apt to that Duty, and shal find bountiful dealings from the hands of others, God and men: he that is upright, thorough, and simple in Spirit and practice, he shal be more exact every way, and find peace and praise as the fruit of that: *he that is pure*, that is, not only contents himself to be simple and sincere hearted in his whol course, but is dayly purging himself, and clensing his own heart, and severing himself from such taints and remainders of distempers that appear, and labors to cleer up the Rule in the beauty and excellency thereof to himself, that he may see more of it, submit more freely and fully to it; *the Lord will make himself pure to him*. So the word. God wil let in pure instructions, that no darkness or dimness may stumble him, or cause him to mistake; pure evidence of pardon, and acceptance, no guilt may unsettle him; pure comforts and peace that no doubts or fears may discourage him; pure holiness and power of sanctification, that no strength of corruption may blur the Image of God in him, or darken the Evidence of the Work of Grace received. But if *a man will be froward*, crook the Rule, go cross to the Command, and wil walk in the vanity of his own mind, and stubbornness of his own Spirit, oppose the power of the Truth, not willing to look upon, or abide to hear of the purity of it. *God will shew himself froward* towards such a one, he wil curse you, and cross you in your whol course, and in al your comforts; you crook and wind away from the Rule to content your sins, God by his Righteous Law, by vertue of the provoking power thereof, wil deliver you up to the power of your sins, and to al the terrors, and plagues, and expressions of his displeasure that attend thereupon: and in the daies of thy distress, when nothing wil help thee but the holy Word of God,

God, God wil then deal with you, and follow you with the curſe of your own frowardneſs, thou would'ſt not ſee the holineſs and purity of Gods Precepts, thou ſhalt have a mind not able to attend, or receive, or remember any thing that may be for thy direction, ſupport, or comfort, but only live upon thine own guilt, and the terrors that attend thereupon, and the perverſneſs of thine own heart wil be thine own plague: In your froward pangs you flinch and fling, care not what you ſay or do; God can be as froward as you, nor hear prayers, nor regard your complaints, nor pity your neceſſities, but purſue you with his plagues, let fly on every hand the fierceneſs of his diſpleaſure; God can and wil hamper thee if thou had'ſt a heart as fierce as a fiend of Hell, make thee weary of thy part, be as perverſe as thou wilt or canſt be. And therefore the word in the place is marvelous pregnant, it ſignifies to contend with another, as one that wraſtles wil do, wreath, and bend, and turn his body every way, that he may meet with his adverſary with whom he is to grapple. So the Lord will meet with thee at every turn; the greater thy oppoſition hath been againſt him, the greater expreſſion of his diſpleaſure ſhalt thou be ſure to feel, and that in the moſt dreadful manner. The ſins of *Manaſſeh* were high handed, and helliſh abominations, mighty provocations, out of meaſure ſinful. 2 *Chron.* 33. 11. Therefore God abaſed him mightily, fettered, and impriſoned, and humbled him mightily, and made him cry mightily before he could find audience and acceptance with him: the cruel and harſh carriage of the Jaylor, *Acts*, 16. exceeded his Commiſſion, and ſo the bounds of common Humanity, to deal worſe with the diſtreſſed than either their Fact deſerved, or the Law permitted, or Authority allowed him in that behalf, a ſpirit tranſported with deadly indignation againſt the waies of God and his People, and as it appears by the circumſtances of the ſtory, a man that pleaſed himſelf in ſuch unreaſonable

practices; the Lord therefore handles him answerably to the harshness of his spirit, makes the Earth quake and the Prison totter, the bolts break, and the door fly open, and at last his heart begins to shake and die within him, notwithstanding the fierceness of his Spirit. So *Paul*, Acts, 9. he comes trembling to crave the Counsel of those whose presence formerly he loathed.

There is a Three-fold Ground, from whence the Reasons of this Point may be fetched; which will Evidence, That this manner of proceeding best suits with the infinite Wisdom of God, look we at God, at others, at the sinner himself, with whom the Lord is now trading.

Reas. 1. *The Holiness of Gods Nature, and exactness of his Truth, not only commends, but even seems with some kind of comely necessity, to call for such a manner of Dispensation.* The Lord stiles himself, *the holy One of Israel, a God of purer eyes than can endure to behold iniquity*, not able to pass by sin in the least appearance of it; and therefore leaves so strict a charge, beware lest there be an evil thought in thy heart, and abstain from all appearance of evil, 1 *Thes.* 5. When the Lord is to convince the sinner of sin, to express his mind and displeasure against him, because of those his evils, so scandalous and detestable to al that have but the least spark of saving knowledg and Grace, yea loathsom to the very light of Conscience in corrupt Nature. Should the Lord easily and overly pass them by, with some smal appearance of some little dislike, it could not but impeach his Purity, and make himself accessary to the dishonor of his own Holiness. When *Eli* proceeded not with that zeal against the evil of his Sons, as the hainousness thereof might justly have provoked him unto, but after a slight manner manifested a heart-less dislike of it; the Lord professeth, 1 *Sam.* 2. 39. *That he honored*

nored his ſons before him, rather reſpected their carnal content, that they might not be ſo deeply aſhamed, and juſtly puniſhed as they did deſerve than the honor of his name and the excellency of his ordinances and worſhip, that they might be preſerved in that purity and attended with that awfulneſs and holineſs of heart as was meet. Now that which God abhors and puniſheth ſo ſeverely in another, its not poſſible that the leaſt appearance of any ſo great an evil ſhould be juſtly charged upon *the holy one of Iſrael*, for he ſhould deny himſelf to be God if he ſhould deny the exactneſs of his own infinite holineſs, and he ſhould not be juſt, ſhould he not manifeſt the glory of his holineſs, according to the excellency and infiniteneſs thereof. True it is that out of meer grace and mercy the Lord Chriſt brings the ſoul of a ſinner from his ſin, but the ſame mercy that would ſave the ſinner, cannot but deſtroy the ſin and expreſs its deteſtation againſt it, otherwiſe may others ſay, and the rebellious ſinner think, that either the word requires more than it needs and the Saints do more than they ought, or elſe the Lord is not holy as men imagin, when the Saints expreſs ſo great deteſtation againſt ſo groſs and ſcandalous evil which the Lord looks at with ſo little diſlike.

In regard of others, the ſharpneſs of this diſpenſation of the Lord againſt ſuch ſcandalous and notorious offenders, ſeems to be very neceſſarie, Leaſt the hearts of the wicked ſhould be encouraged and their hands ſtrengthened to adventure to commit, and careleſs to reforme the greateſt evils when they ſhal obſerve ſome of their crew and company, who were as bad or worſe than themſelves, yet finds acceptance and forgiveneſs at the hands of the Lord upon ſuch eaſy terms and with ſo little trouble, It's that of the wiſe man *Eccleſ.* 8. 11. *When puniſhment againſt a Malefactor is but delayed, it's in the hearts of the ſons of men to take encouragement to commit evil*, If the delay of the puniſhment which is not

Reaſ. 2.

not long, do ſo encourage them when that is but little and ſlight, how wil that imbolden in a fearleſs kind of impudency to proceed to any out-rage, when they can promiſe themſelves pardon upon the ſame terms which others have found before them, in the like caſe and condition with themſelves? Therefore the Lord in his infinite wiſdom, doth ſo temper the ſweetneſs of his mercy, and the ſeverity of his wrath, in the recovery of a loſt and forlorn wretch; riches of mercy to the ſoul to ſave that, rigor of ſeverity againſt the loathſomneſs of ſin to deſtroy that; ſo that none ſhould be diſcouraged to ſeek for pardon of the greateſt wickedneſs, and yet none encouraged to continue the ſhorteſt time in the leaſt ſin, ſince Gods diſpleaſure is ſo dreadful againſt al. It was the courſe that the Lord preſcribes to his Vice-gerents here on Earth in their proceedings againſt ſin, that it ſhould be ſuch, *that all Iſrael may hear and fear, and do no more ſo*, Deut. 17. 13. he wil not be wanting to do that againſt ſin which he would have to be done by others, he wil hamper al ſuch Rebels, that the reſt of the company ſhal have little cauſe to bleſs themſelves in any of their ſinful waies.

Reaſ. 3. *In regard of the ſinner himſelf, it's ſafeſt for him that he may be throughly recovered from his corruption for the preſent, and preſerved againſt it for the time to come.* Recovered for the preſent, he needs heavy blows, or elſe he is like never to have any good by them. As with Trees that are rooted deep, and of long time & continuance, ordinary winds have ſetled them, it muſt be a Herricano that muſt pluck & tear them up from their roots. So when the ſinner is rooted in theſe wretched diſtempers: the wood that is knotty, there muſt be ſharper wedges, & the heavieſt beerle, and the hardeſt blows to break it: So it is with the hard, and ſtupid, and knotty heart of a ſcandalous ſinner. As with the ſtomach filled with ſtiff and noyſom humors, eaſie Phyſick, and gentle Receipts may happily ſtir the humors, but it muſt be ſtrong

Ingre-

Ingredients, and a great quantity that muſt remove it. So with a corrupt heart.

This is a means alſo to preſerve him from it afterward; if once he have throughly ſmarted for his ſin, he will fear to meddle with it; if he have felt the danger of the Surfet, he wil taſt the Sweet-meat no more.

TRYAL. We have here Ground of Diſcovery how to paſs a ſafe Sentence touching the Spiritual Eſtate of ſome perſons, namely, *The eaſie and ſudden converſion of ſuch who have been groſly wicked, or ſcandalouſly vile*: By groſly wicked, I mean ſuch who have been taken aſide with ſome loathſom abominations, though they carry it never ſo covertly, as your cloſe adulteries, fornications, thefts, murders, continued forgeries of falſ-hood and injuſtice: By ſcandalouſly vile, I mean ſuch who have continued in an open tract of profeſſed oppoſition againſt the power of Godlineſs: I ſay, the eaſie and ſudden converſion of ſuch, gives juſt ground of ſuſpicion why they may queſtion the truth of the Work, and others juſtly ſuſpect it, unleſs their judgments be ſetled by ſad proof, long experience, and that upon ſerious obſervation. It's not Gods ordinary way, and therefore men ſhould take more than ordinary tryal before they truſt, or in truth thou truſt thy ſelf. The proceeding of God in his Word and Providence, are according to the Rules of Wiſdom, and the right order of cauſes and means, by which he hath appointed to bring about his own will, and the Work of his Grace in the hearts of his. To ſave men *per ſaltum* is not Gods uſual way, that works of greateſt weight and difficulty, ſhould be done in ſo little time, and with ſo little labor and trouble, in other caſes thou would'ſt think it impoſſible; why ſhould'ſt thou judg the contrary reaſonable in this, which is hardeſt, and the weightieſt work of all other, unleſs thou haſt more than ordinary warrant for it? When men grow rich of a ſudden, and to a great Eſtate, *Uſe.*

Eſtate, and thoſe who obſerve their courſe, ſee neither waies nor means in reaſon how to raiſe it, each man concludes, it's not his own Eſtate, but other mens Stock that he braves it withal, for he is worſe than nothing, or elſe he never truly came by it, ſo that a State ſomtimes queſtions ſuch. So here, when a man grows up to a great Eſtate of Grace, and no man can tel how; within ſo many quarters or yeers, he was as baſe a wretch as the Earth bore, not fit to ſit with the Dogs of a mans flock, his carriage ſo reffuſe and vile, as that he was not fit for the Society of moral men, that no man could tel how to beleeve his words, or to truſt his dealing; and is he now of a ſudden come to the top of Religion? a ſweet, godly, gracious man, fit to be made a Member of a Congregation; how came he to ſuch a large meaſure of Grace and Godlineſs? Surely not as other men uſe to do, and therefore it's a great ſuſpicion he came not truly by his Grace, nor is he truly that he ſeems to be; great ſins coſt other men great ſorrows; grievous ſcandals coſt great grief of heart, great heart-breakings, humiliations, and ſatisfactions: great Grace and power againſt ſin, great pains, and the higheſt ſtrain of exactneſs in ſpeeches and practices; they that knew and ſee the Converſations of ſuch, never ſaw nor knew any ſuch matter; it's certain he, and al the Chriſtians in the world, may juſtly queſtion his uprightneſs, whether yet he be not worſe than nothing, if there were a true inventory taken of his Eſtate in Grace; out of the depth of prophaneneſs to come to the height of holineſs at unawares, it's a work of deluſion, not of true converſion to God. Trees that are planted in Gods Orchard, they take root downward, and then bring forth fruit upward: Upſtart Chriſtians are like *Jonah* his Guord, grow ripe and rotten preſently, flouriſh and fade, and al in a day. Untimely births are never true, nor yet of continuance; when an old ſore is healed too haſtily, it never proves ſound, it's skinned over, not cured, feſters inwardly, proves

more

more grievous and dangerous than at the first: The skilful Chyrurgeon wil tel you it must be searched, lanced, tented, before it attain its ful and perfect Cure. So it is with that cankered corrupt heart of thine, who hast lived and continued in those loathsom abominations which thou hast hugged in thy bosom, it must be lanced by the cutting knife of the Law, and the dreadful curse thereof, searched by the soul-saving preaching of the Gospel, and dayly tented with constant contritions and breakings of heart, otherwise know assuredly, that those hellish lusts of thine wil imposthume within thy soul, and in issue break out more loathsomly, and thy latter end wil be worse than thy beginning. To find little or no hardness in that which in thy reason thou conceivest and concludest to be the hardest work of all; how canst thou but suspect thou art cozened and mistaken? Make it thine own case in another thing, and be thine own Judg; wert thou enjoyned to drain a Quagmire, or a dirty rotten Swamp, to fit it for the Plough, and should any man seem to perswade it would cost but litte time or labor, might easily be dispatched, thou would'st scarsly with patience hear such an expression, as that which is expresly contrary to common sense, why should men speak of impossibilities, or think that men should conceive that reasonable that is against Reason; not only Trees felled, stubbed, removed, but the ground gained which is not arable, and al this in a short space with ease? Look now into thy condition with this resemblance, and be thine own Judg; thou hast a dunghil heart, a soul like a dirty swamp, those hellish abominations which have taken up thy mind, and will, and affections, in which thou hast continued, and unto which thou hast been accustomed, so that thy heart is like a standing puddle of prophaneness, which have weakened and wasted the very faculties of thy soul; so that thy heart is not fallow ground, as the Prophet speaks *Plow up the fallow ground*, Jer. 4. it's not arable

ground, even abilities so wasted and disordered with thy wretched and unreasonable lusts, and dost thou think that these abilities can be drained easily, and thy Spirit made good soyl, even *a good and honest heart*, without extraordinary power on Gods part, and more than ordinary labor on thine. When the covetous yong man that was glewed to the world, and had his heart riveted in restless and immoderate desires after these Earthly things; so that all the directions which our Savior gave, and the great offers he made of Heaven and Salvation, could not take off his affections, but *he went away sorrowful*; saies our Savior, *How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; it's easier for a Cable rope to enter in at the eye of a Needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Grace here, and Glory hereafter.* Matth. 29. 22, 23, 24. He spake of one, it's true of all by the like proportion; how hard is it for a rich man, it's as true to say, how hard is it for a riotous, unclean, malitious, voluptuous, self-conceited, rebellious wretch; he that hath scandalously continued in these, accustomed himself to these, how hard is it for such saies the Text. And doest thou find it easie? a Holy-day task, and a trifling labor, that which may suddenly be done without such trouble; either Christ is deceived, or thou art mistaken; either the Word fails, or thy apprehension fails: Whether the Scriptures or thy Conceit is to be beleeved, let thine heart judg, unless thou wilt be an Atheist. The Word in reason never wrought that work, nor wil it give in Evidence and approbation thereof. The Prophet *Isai.* 46. last, describing a rebellious sinner, he thus speaks of him; *Hearken ye stout-hearted, who are far from righteousness.* A man that hath gone many yeers, and that with much speed and labor one way, which is down-hil, to return to the same place when the way is more difficult, with a little time, and less labor, there is little probability, if possibility in reason. So here, thou hast

hurried

hurried headlong in the waies of wickedness, hast had ful wind and tide, Satans temptation, thine own corruption, to carry thee with mighty violence many yeers together in thy scandalous course, dost thou think suddenly and easily to return back? No beleeve it, thou must take many a weary step, send out many a heavy sigh, tug at it with continual prayers and tears, and the uttmost improvement of al thine endeavor, nay it will cost thee hot water, the setting on before thou seest that day.

I read of a double expression, 1. Of the Devils going out. 2. Of his casting out, *Matth.* 12. 43, *When the unclean spirit goes out, &c.* which is done by some outward and serious reformation, and some sudden resolution wrought out of terror, to forsake such and such courses; this smoaks Satan out of his house, &c.

COMFORT. *This is ground of great support, and in Truth of strong consolation, to shore up the hearts of forlorn and scandalous Creatures, when they lie under the most direful strokes of Gods heaviest displeasure.* When the loathsomness of their lives, and hellish abominations of their hearts are presented to their view, their Consciences now accuse, and the Lord from Heaven by his infinite indignation encamps against them with Armies of terrors, so that to their sight and sence there is nothing appearing but present ruin and confusion: *Yet out of the strong, comes sweet*; greatest safety issues out of the heaviest searchings and breakings of heart. Here is now ground of strong support to bear thy heart above all these devouring horrors, which like so many waves would overwhelm thy soul. The more miserable thou findest thy condition, the more comfortable it is. It seems a riddle, carries the appearance of contrariety and impossibility, and yet upon proof and tryal, wil prove an infallible Truth. The heavier the blows be, which come from Gods hand for those gross

Use, 2.

Judges. 14. 14.

evils of thine, there is more probability of his ſerious intendment of good unto thy ſoul: The greater thy ſtrokes are at preſent, the greater thy hopes are of ſome ſpiritual relief and refreſhing in future times. And there is no greater plague upon earth, hardly ſuch another in hell, that a wretch ſhould proſper in his wickedneſs and go ſuddenly down to the bottomleſs pit before he ſee where he is. It was the carriage of a great Commander in his time, yet mervailous ſharp in the execution of military diſcipline, when a Souldier had deſerved death by martial law, if he ſeemed to ſmile upon him it was a meſſenger of death, and therefore his old Soldiers that ſaw the manner of his proceeding, whenever he appeared to laugh they looked then for a doom, inſomuch that an antient follower of his coming before him for ſome miſcarriage, his General carrying himſelf in a ſilent manner; he breaks forth in this manner. Good my Lord do not ſmile on me, for he then knew the ſentence of execution would be the next he ſhould hear of. It is her moſt certain and ſo judg of it. If thy carriage and thy Conſcience likewiſe give in teſtimony of the loathſomneſs and vileneſs of thy corrupt converſation, that thy behaviour is deteſtable to any who have any ſpiritual diſcerning, yea to moral perſons; if the Lord ſeem to ſmile upon thee, not ſo much as check thee in thy ſcandalous way, know that the ſentence of deſtruction is the next that is like to enſue, *Math* 23. 34. 35. *I will ſend you Prophets and Apoſtles and ſome ye ſhall kill and ſtone &c. that the blood of al the Prophets may come upon you, fulfil the meaſure of your ſins and ſo receive the fulneſs of the meaſure of plagues. How can yee eſcape the damnation of hell.* ver. 32. 33. 1 Theſ. 2. 15. *The Jewes both killed the Lord Jeſus, and their own Prophets, and have perſecuted us, they pleaſe not God and are contrary to al men, to fill up their ſins alwayes, for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermoſt* When men have elbow room in their wretched wayes,

and,

and are not croſſed in their helliſh corruptions, the wrath is come upon them to the utmoſt. This is the dregs of God vengeance, the utmoſt of Gods indignation, thou canſt hardly be worſe if not in hell. Whereas great heart-breakings for ſin give in more than a little hope, and probability of good intended, ſee this in the ſeveral degrees of it, and al follow from the doctrine delivered.

It ſhewes, poor forlorn wretch that thou art in the way of mercy. God deals ſo with thee as he uſually doth with thoſe with whom he wil deal well in the iſſue, he hath not left thee to thy ſelf and ſins, and ceaſed ſtriving with thee to ſtop thee and recal thee from thy ſinful courſe, as commonly he doth when he delivers up a ſoul to the power of his corruption, with whom he intends no more to meddle, *Iſai.* 1. 5. So he proceeds with the perverſe and obſtinate Jewes, *why ſhould yee be ſmitten any more, yee fal away more and more*; As the Father with the prodigal, my counſels cannot move thee, my bleſſings allure thee, al my corrections I have layed upon thee do not reclame thee, take thy courſe therefore, and ſo caſts him out of his family, and takes no further care of him. But he whom he corrects moſt ſharply for his faults, it's yet a pregnant evidence for the while that he purpoſeth to keep him. This is the *day of Gods viſitation*, may be the laſt time of asking yet it is the time of asking and grace and the date of mercy. God is yet wraſtling with thee as loath to leave thee to the malice of Satan, and the power of thy diſtempers, as he doth with them that he purpoſeth to do good unto *Iſai.*6.9. when God would prepare a people for ruin, and devote and ſet them apart to deſtruction this is the way he takes *Go make the hearts of this people fat*, fatneſs implys a brawny kind of ſtupidity, and ſenceleſneſs of ſpirit. Then ſuch perſons are ripe and ready for deſtruction; when God plucks up the ſtake and gives a forlorn wretch the round rope, let him have his wil 1.

wil; *Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone*, Hoſ. 4. 17. *He that is unjuſt let him be unjuſt ſtil; he that is filthy let him be filthy ſtil.* Yea this is that which caſts a ſinner beyond the compaſs of the compaſſions of the Almighty, when the Lord profeſſeth he wil not meddle nor make, he wil have nothing to do with ſuch vile creatures, *Hoſ.* 4. 14. *I wil not puniſh your daughters when they commit whordome, nor your ſpouſes when they commit adultery, therefore the people that doth not underſtand ſhal fal.* But when God wil take pains and trouble himſelf with ſuch a Rebel, hath thee upon the anvil, & beſtows ſo much fire and ſo much melting, yet there is hope that he may make thee a veſſel of grace, and for the Lords uſe.

2. *There is ſome expectation that the work may prove more ſpeedy and ſucceſsful*, as it is in the body, in old feſtred ſores, he that ripples the skin, and layes eaſy ſalves, he wil be long in doing a little, and yet fail at laſt, when he hath done al, he that lanceth to the bottom, in reaſon is like to bring out the core, and to haſten the cure, both with ſpeed and ſucceſs; the ſtronger the phyſick ſtirs and works upon the humor, the ſooner the patient recovers, and health returns with ſome ſtability and continuance. It is ſo in the ſoul, thoſe old cankered luſts which have been of long continuance in a corrupt heart, ſome ſlight terrors or ſudden flaſhes of Gods diſpleaſure, which may a little trouble the Conſcience and ripple the skin as it were, they paſs away preſently and leave the root of the diſtemper untouched, at the leaſt not removed, ſo that the corruptions grow more fierce and violent, and ſo break out in a more loathſome manner than ever formerly. Whereas thoſe direful & overbearing horrors, in a way of rational providence are of a more prevayling nature, to aſtoniſh the heart, ſhake the Conſcience of the wicked, and ranſack the very core of thoſe hideous corruptions, which have been long harboured and lodged within. Thus the Lord

deals

dealt with the revolting & Apostatizing Israelites. *Hos.* 2. 6. 7. *He hedged their wayes with Thorns and built a wal before them, and they shal seek their lovers and shal not find them, and then shal she say I wil return to my first husband &c.* Had the hedg been so smal and easy and the wal so low that they might have broken through the one or leaped over the other, she would have made a hard shift but she would have followed and found her lovers; but the hedg was made of thorns piercing and unsufferable sorrows, and necessities unavoydable, not to be indured, not to be removed, and those wearied her out of al pretended delights she had formerly taken. This is the method that God useth *Hos.* 5. 12. 14. *Hos.* 6. 1. *First I wil be a Moath,* 2 if that wil not do *I wil be a Lion,* 3 If that wil not do I wil leave them and go to my place withdraw his comforting and protecting presence; and then we hear immediately. *Come let us return unto the Lord for he hath torn and he wil heal us*; this did it.

This makes way for our spiritual comfort in a special blessing if he be pleased to follow the stroke with his blessing. 3. For its a special means to bring in clearer evidence and greater assurance both of the soundness of the work and the certainty of a mans good estate, al the dayes of his life, if the Lord be pleased to second these heavy breakings of heart with his blessing. For it is the nature of contraries, when they are set in opposition to make each other appear more plainly. For a conscientious Saint to be made of a gross loathsom, scandalous sinner is so notorious a change especially when the dreadful expressions of Gods displeasure have been so amazing in the eyes of al that have been the spectators and in a peculiar manner astonishing to the soul of the prophane creature that hath felt the arrows of the Almighty sticking fast in him, as he cannot be but restless before he get relief and help, so he cannot but know it when he hath gained it, the change is great and open, Gods dispensation

dispensation so glorious. This man is able to say, at such a time in such a place, by such a man, out of such a text, the Lord was pleased to speak home to my heart to make known himself, my self and sin to my self, which caused my soul to dy within me, in the sence of my vileness and misery, and from that time forward, followed me daily with fears and horrors, the venom of vengeance drinking up my spirits until in such and such a manner and by such means he was pleased to work my heart to his own tearms, made me glad to seek him importunately yea restlesly, and more glad to find him sealing up the truth of his free love by his own spirit in the word of truth; This man can tel how he came by his grace, and can tel what to say and shew for heaven, and happily unless it be through his own careless neglect may carry the assurance with him to his grave. Whereas such as the Lord doth sweetly but secretly draw unto himself, in an insensible and undiscernable manner, restrains them from common evils, traynes them up under Godly Parents, religious government, good company and spiritual means of Instruction, and so implants by little and little into the Lord Jesus, without their privity or apprehension however their estate is good, and their condition safe in its self, yet they gaine littl evidence or maintain little assurance thereof in their own hearts, but upon every turn are questioning and quarrelling, doubting and staggering, touching their condition, whereas they that come to their grace by many and great troubles retain it commonly with great evidence, Thus *Paul* when the Lord Christ had made a glorious conquest over his proud rebellious and malicious heart, against the holy wayes of his truth and servants. He could tel and did upon al occasions when the field was fought, how the Lord Christ got the day over his hellish distempered heart. Thus he relates Gods dealing. *Acts.* 26. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. *Acts.* 22. 1. to the 14. And so issues

having

having obtained help of God I continue until this day thus it was, so it is; thus it was wrought, so maintained.

And though it be true I confeſs that no man ſhould or wil break his arme, that he may have it the ſtronger for the ſetting, or know how it is ſet; or therefore be careleſs to become ſcandalouſly vile, that God may be glorioufly merciful: yet through the riches of mercy which makes our loſſes gaines. The certainty of the aſſurance we find, doth countervail and exceed the terrors and horror we felt. Give me the man who can ſay, I was blind but now I ſee; I know I was in priſon but am now delivered; its not deluſion but a viſion and real accompliſhment of the work by the Allmighty hand of God.

Laſtly its honourable for a poor ſcandalous wretch to be under ſuch heavy breakings of heart, and therefore it ſhould be comfortable to him. I rather mention this to ſtop the mouths of the reffuſe rabble of the world, and to ſhew the deſperate miſtakes unto which carnal reaſon carryes us, out of the pride of our own ſpirits; wee know that ſin is deteſtable and ſhame loathſom, even to nature eſpecially corrupt and proud, to be forced to acknowledg the one, to take the other. It appears very direful to the apprehenſion of al the ſons of *Adam.* And therefore when the Lord is pleaſed to hold a ſcandalous wretch upon the wrack and to make him roar out his wretchedneſs, vomit out his ſin and take the ſhame he hath deſerved. His companions that have converſed with him, and his freinds that have honored him, they are driven to their dumps in diſcouragment and diſcontentment, and cry out the man is undone, and curſe the day that ever the Miniſter came into the countrey, and blames his folly and fillineſs that he would attend to what he ſaied and be troubled with any thing he heard, to bring an everlaſting blemiſh upon himſelf. No: I ſay ther's no ſuch matter. This is the greateſt honor that yet ever befel him in this world, and wil be a means of bleſſing to him in another. It is a 4.

shame to commit sin but not to have the heart breaking under the apprehension of it. Nay it is an expression of Gods favour and as it may prove, a sign of Gods special love, if it be rightly emproved. God thus far honors a poor wretch that he wil speak to him as he passeth by. Should a Prince that was provoked by the conspiracies and rebellions of many Traitors, as he passed by, should he vouchsafe to send unto, and cal upon some one to reclaime him from his crew, and company and courses, and that upon very equal terms he might find acceptance and pardon and peace: when he wil not so much as look after others, or change a word with them, would not this be accounted matter of marvelous respect from the King, and honor to the man? So here. As *David*, begs favour from the Lord. Psal. 119. 132. *be merciful to me, and look upon me as thou usest to do upon them that desire to fear thy name*, he takes it to be the highest pitch of his happiness to be so dealt withal. If God deal with thee as with these, as he dealt *with the Jaylour*, as he dealt *with Paul* whom he made *a choyce vessel* for himself, art thou not highly honored? why should God knock at thy dore and cal in upon thy Conscience &c.

Use 4. ADVISE *unto Ministers, whose place and calling it is, under the Lord, to deal with such persons under such diseases.* Hence we may see a right way in holy prudence how to proceed with them, in the times of temptations and their saddest distresses of spirit. See what God doth, and that we may do. As Gods deals so we may deal as the safest way and most likely to find succes.

When therefore we have fortifyed the heart with hope, in regard of the sufficiency of God free grace, and possibility of relief from him: *As that he is able to do excessive exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think*, As in desperate cures men use cordials to fortify against faintings of heart, that they may better bear the hardnes of the cure: this being supposed then the rule is. The sharpest receits are most seasonable in a right

Eph. 3. 20.

manner

manner of proceeding and that in three things.

1 *Be not ſlight in the ſearching.*

2 *Be not too haſty to heal;*

3 *Be not too ſuddeenly confident of the cure.*

Not ſlight in the ſearch for that is moſt dangerous, and an error here can hardly ever be recovered, go therefore to the quick, ſee the bottome, if ever you hope to make work of it, or to lend help indeed. He that cleaves knotty logs muſt have the ſharpeſt wedges and hardeſt blowes. Here pity is unſeaſonable and greateſt cruelty. When out of feebleneſs we are afraid to put men to pain, we encreaſe their pains and haſten their deſtruction, *Jer.* 6. 14. *they have healed alſo the hurt of the daughter of my people ſlightly.* The Apoſtle teacheth another way. *Titus.* 1. 13. *reprove them ſharply that they may be ſound in the faith.* Sharp reproofes make ſound Chriſtians. He ſhewes greateſt love and mercy which followes the Lord in love and mercy. Yea it is a courſe that procures moſt eaſe to the party, the corroſive that eats away the proud fleſh brings ſooneſt eaſe becauſe that proud fleſh and humors bring al the pain. So theſe dreadful overbearing threatnings abate the pride of the heart, and a mans perverſneſs and ſo brings eaſe, for the waywardneſs of our own wils work our own woe, and here, not to trouble mens ſins and Conſciences is indeed to trouble their peace and comfort in iſſue. Thus *Samuel.* 1 Sam. 12. 20. He leſſeneth nothing of their ſin, onely ſendeth them forth to mercy for relief. *Ye have indeed done al this wickedneſs yet do not forſake the Lord.*

Be not too haſty to heal the wound. More haſt than good ſpeed draws here deſperate inconveniences with it and may be hazards their comforts while they live. Old and deep ſores as they have been long in gathering corrupt humors, ſo they muſt have a time to waſt and wear them away, which wil not be done in a moment; old ſtayns muſt lye long in ſoak, and have many freſh 2.

lavers before in reason they can be clensed. So old distempers which have taken strong possession, and are of long continuance, happily if the cure be too hasty, it wil hazard our comforts: The Israelites left War too suddenly with the Canaanites, they tributed them, and
Judges, 2. 3. not destroyed them; and they proved *goads in their sides*, which they could not get rid of all their daies.

3. *Be not suddenly confident of the Cure.* Let men be Probationers in our apprehensions, let them proceed in a fearful and painful way to make proof of the inward disposition of their hearts, by their outward practices in a constancy of an holy conversation. As *Solomon* said of *Adonijah*, 1 King. 1. 52. *Let him shew himself a worthy man.* This creating of Professors, making men Christians by our applause and approbation, because they have attained the under strokes of horror, skil & ability to holy Services, proves the bane of their souls, the blemish of their Profession, and a breach of their Peace; either they have turned wretches again, or else have been overtaken with their carelesnes, so that they have been foyled by gross falls, and hardly ever recovered their peace and comfort though they have taken off the scandal. Therefore as *John* Baptist told them, if indeed you purpose *to flee from the wrath to come, bring forth fruits worthy of amendment*, Matth. 3. 8. such as wil carry weight, and fetch up the scales as it were, and undoubtedly evidence the work of Grace.

Use 4. *Matter of Caution and Direction unto such whom God hath exercised with such heavy breakings of heart for their scandalous courses; beware ye be not weary, and labor to make an escape from under the Dispensation of the Lord*, but give welcom thereunto; help forward the work, do not resist it, make way for the Dispensation of the Lord, do not oppose it, and therefore possess thy heart with a necessity of subjection thereunto. Why should'st thou think to have an exception? be rather fearful thou shouldst not find the Truth of the work

work of these terrors, than that thou should'st be fearful to endure these; if he will land thee in Christ, he will toss thee in this manner. As a Patient having a desperate wound, he enquires what the Chyrurgeon did to others, and how the Salve did work upon others in his case, and if he find the Salve and working be the same, he hopes that he also shal be cured. So here.

EXHORTATION. *Improve the utmost of our endeavor to keep our selves, and all ours from scandalous sins.* Restraining Grace is but common Grace, yet is it a great favor of the Lord that he will curb and restrain a man; by this means the work of Conversion is more easie, and such persons freed from dreadful terrors that seize upon others, *Mark*, 12. 34. *Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* Let's bring our Children as neer to Heaven as we can, it is in our power to restrain them, and reform them, and that we ought to do: As it was the speech of a godly woman, she besought that al means might be used to restrain her Children, that if it were possible their reckoning might not be so heavy as mine, &c. *Use 5.*

A Prophane course cannot hinder the unresistible work of Gods Grace. *Object.*

It's true, But though God may save thy soul, yet he may scorch thy soul in the flames of Hell fire, and make thee weary of thy part, and of thy lusts and all. Are there no terrors dreadful, but those of the torments of the damned in Hell? Yes, you will find it, you may pay deer for al your pleasures in sin, for al your fleshly lusts, before your hearts be brought off from them: therefore you that are Parents, joyn your helping hands to this great and good Work, beat down the stubbornness, do what you can to restrain the loosness and prophaneness of the spirits of your children, though it's not in your power to bring them in, yet bring them as neer to the Kingdom of God as you can, &c. *Answ.*

They

They were pricked in their hearts.

The laſt Doctrine which is conſidered touching the Work it ſelf.

Doct. 2. *Sorrow for ſin rightly ſet on, pierceth the heart of the ſinner through, that is truly affected therewith.*

They were pricked, not in their eyes to weep for their ſins, ſo *Eſau* could; not in their tongues only to confeſs their ſin, ſo *Judas* did, *I have ſinned in betraying innocent blood*; nor in their hands alone to reform it outwardly, ſo thoſe Apoſtats did, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. *They eſcaped the pollutions of the world through the acknowledgment of our Lord and Savior Jeſus Chriſt*: but it reached their hearts, their ſouls bled inwardly: their ſouls were moſt guilty, and had the greateſt hand in the commiſſion of thoſe bloody and execrable cruelties; the fountain of their ſorrow, did riſe as high as the beginning of their ſin; ſoul ſins, and ſoul ſorrows.

Nor was the ſtroke ſlight, not the ripling of the skin, a lighter touch, a ſudden pang, a ſigh and away; nay, not only lanced and gaſhed, the rotten impoſthumes of the corruptions of their hearts in a great meaſure, but ranſacked the very root of the corruption, pierced the heart quite through; through and through again as it were, let out the core of the moſt inward, and moſt retired corruptions, that were lodged in their boſom and bottom of their hearts. And this work proceeded not from any power of their own, nor from the liberty and freedom of their wils, as that which they made choyce of, and out of their own ability did readily put forth, but it was ſet on by the hand of the Almighty, in the entrance

trance whereof they were Patient, went against the heart and hair, and wholly beyond their purposes and expectations: So the words are in the passive form; *they were pricked*, they did not prick themselves. Nay certainly could they have told how to prevent it, how to remove it, or to procure any ease and relief unto themselves, they would never have cryed out as men in a maze, and astonishing straights of Spirit, *What shall we do?* Thus God proceeds when he purposeth to make a through work. When God was purposed to set upon the revolting people of the Jews, and to bring them savingly home to himself, *Hos.* 13. 4. so Interpreters carry it, according to the foregoing and following words, *I am the Lord thy God from the Land of* Egypt, *and there is no Savior besides me*, ver. 4. and blames also the frowardness and folly of their Spirits, not yielding so readily, and taking the advantage of Gods dealing for their good, ver. 13. *The sorrows of a travelling woman shall come upon him, he is an unwise son, for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of Children*, q. d. The Lord in mercy offers himself to the Israelites under their terrors as a Midwife, that would make way for them out of their sins and sorrows: Now in this Dispensation of his towards the people to be converted, he professeth, that *he will meet with them as a Bear bereaved of her whelps, he will rend the caul of their hearts*, ver. 8. the words are, the cloture and shutting up of their hearts; sinners are shut up under the power of their distempers, as the Apostle saith, all men by Nature *are shut up under unbelief*, Rom. 11. 32. especially there be some closets and secret corners and conveyances of soul, wherein the most sweet and delightful abominations are hugged and harbored: the Lord leaves not a poor wretch, if indeed he intend his good, before he breaks open those great depths, rests not before he come home to the root, and let out the heart-blood

blood of thy luſts, and then their death wil undoubtedly follow.

And hence it is this ſorrow is compared to ſuch as enter into the very inwards of Nature, and ſinks the ſoul with unſupportable preſſures: when that great converſion and return of the Jews to the entertainment of the Goſpel ſhal be brought about by the Lord. The Prophet ſets forth the greatneſs of that ſorrow of theirs under a double ſimilitude. Firſt, *Zach.* 12. 10. *They ſhall mourn for him, as the mother mourns for her only ſon, and for her firſt born*: the mourning of a tender hearted mother for her ſon, her firſt born, and for her only ſon, he adds al degrees of grief: if ſhe had poſſeſſed many, ſhe might more eaſily have wanted one, or at leaſt parted with it; or had it been any but her firſt born which had the firſt of her ſtrength, and the firſt of her love, yet ſhe might have born it with more quietneſs: but when al theſe meet together, her life and comfort is wrapped up in the life of the Child, the mourning becomes unmeaſurable, fils the heart as it were. Secondly, It ſhall be *like the mourning of* Hadadrimmon *in the Valley of* Megiddon, when al Iſrael lamented the death of their good *Joſiah*, the light of their eyes, the breath of their Noſtrils, the comfort of their ſouls, 2 *Chron.* 35. 25. Therfore the original words which lay open this work, are of marvelous weight, and diſcover the overpowring vertue thereof, *Iſai.* 57. 18. *The Lord dwels with him that is of a contrite ſpirit.* Iſai. 61. 6. *The Lord binds up the broken heart.* The firſt whereof ſignifies to run to pouder, and to bring to ſmal duſt; it is ſo uſed, *Pſal.* 90. 3. *Thou bringeſt man to the duſt of death, again thou ſayeſt, return ye children of men.* That as the hardeſt ſtone when it's broken al to ſmal mammocks, and pouder as it were, it's eaſie and yielding under the touch of the hand, what ever ruggedneſs and reſiſtance was in it before. So it is with the ſoul that is punned to pouder, ſo that there is not any unbroken, or any whol

whol part to be found there, no ſodering in any ſecret manner with any retired diſtemper; but the weight of godly ſorrow hath ſhatter'd all aſunder, diſtreſs of Conſcience hath brought it to duſt, parted all the privy cloſures with any particular of any diſtemper, all that knotty ſtiffneſs and perverſneſs of ſpirit in ſiding with any corruption is now taken off. The ſoul comes eaſily to give way to the Authority of the Truth, that would take any ſinful luſt away. To the like purpoſe is that of *Job*, Job, 23. 16. when the Armies of Gods indignation had encamped againſt him, and *the terrors of the Lord had drunk up his ſpirit*; ſaies he, *God makes my heart ſoft*, or *hath melted my ſoul*; the word ſignifies a ſevering and ſeparation of one thing from another, and is oppoſite to ſetling and faſtening, making firm, ſtiff, and hard, as that of *Pharaoh*, Exod. 9. laſt, *Pharaoh hardened his heart*, his ſoul faſtened by an invincible reſolution to the ſinful purpoſe of his malicious detaining and oppreſſion of the Jews. When the fierceneſs of Gods diſpleaſure brought home by the breathings of the Spirit of God upon the ſoul, it makes it melt like Wax before the fire, makes it eaſie to give way to the impreſſion of the pleaſure of the Lord, that his Spirit may take away any of thoſe luſts that have been of neereſt league with the heart. Hence laſtly it is, that in the Phraſe of Scripture, the ſinner is ſaid *to be in bitterneſs*, or the ſoul to be imbittered by God, when he is brought and held under the ſence of the loathſomneſs of his ſins, and himſelf by reaſon thereof; ſo that al the ſweet that his liquoriſh heart takes in any pleaſing luſt, is wholly taken away. The Phyſitian obſerves, and reaſon teacheth, that ſweet things only nouriſh, but bitter things cleanſe, the Nature of the ſtomach abhors the preſence of them, expels them, takes no pleaſure therein, receives no nouriſhment therefrom. So with the ſinner in his condition, when the Lord lets out the bitterneſs of ſin upon him, he can find no food relliſh, no delight in his former diſtem-

Zach. 12. 10.

pers, which he followed with that violence, and fed so eagerly upon, even unto surfetting in former times, they will not down with him now. It's a dreadful thing now to him, to take the least tast of them by any serious consideration or remembrance, when formerly he could have made a meal of them by dayly meditation, *When wickedness was sweet in his mouth, and he hid it under his tongue, but now it's turned to the gall of Asps*, and he is not able to endure the poyson and bitterness of it, but it makes him heart-sick, in the sight and sence of it.

Job. 20. 12. 13. 14.

For the opening of the Point, it will be needful to enquire after Five Particulars.

1. *The Manner how this sound sorrow seizeth upon, or is brought in upon the soul.*
2. *How God sets it on, and makes the soul truly affected with it.*
3. *How far the sinner is, or may be said to be active in it.*
4. *What is the behavior of the heart under this stroke, being truly affected.*
5. *The Reason, and then the Use.*

To the Former of these:

The first particular opening the point.

The Manner how this Sorrow is brought in upon the soul.

It is Three-fold in Gods ordinary Dispensation, (reserving exceptions, as he sees fit in his own infinite Wisdom.)

It

It is either { *Successively, and by degrees.*
Suddenly, and at once.
Unsensibly to the heart of the sinner who receives it.

Successively, when the Lord would leave the track and footsteps of his Faithfulness and Truth upon record to the observation of the wise hearted, he then leaves plain impressions of the Power of his Grace and Spirit, in his proceedings with such as he intends to bring effectually home unto himself; *that the goings of our God and King may be seen in the Sanctuary*, and in the souls of his Servants, and it may be attended in these several Degrees. I. *Psal.* 68. 24.

First, *The Lord lets in some unexpected flashes of spiritual Truth, discovering the evil of sin in the general, and the dangerous conditions of such as stand guilty thereof, and continue therein, which were never considered, nor before that time conceived of, by him that hath been an ignorant and careless hearer of the Word*: who came to the means either by constraint, or custom, or complement in a way of course for company sake, never set price upon the means, nor attended to the Truth and goodness thereof, and therefore the Ordinances were as the Waters that pass by, left neither power nor profit upon the soul. But now there is some evidence of Truth which God so directs and darts in, that it flashes like lightning into his face, leaves a kind of amazement upon his mind, and like a sudden blow gasters the apprehension of the sinner, so that he begins to stagger, and is driven to give some attendance to that of which he never took notice before, not knowing wel what to make of himself, nor yet of that which he heard, only he is forced to observe something he never formerly regarded. Hence therefore follows a confused kind of tumult and lumber of thoughts within himself, he begins to be in a 1.

muſe what ſuch things mean, whither they tend, is at a loſs with himſelf, and knows not which way to take; I never heard ſo much as now, if all be true that I have heard, and the Miniſter hath preached; there is more in ſin than ever I imagined, and my condition more miſerable than ever I did conceive. This maskering of ſpirit drives him to make enquiry, the things ſeem ſtrange, he begins to ſearch whether they be true or no. So they to *Paul*, diſputing concerning falſe Worſhip, and their Idolatrous practices, *Acts*, 17. 19, 20. *Thou bringeſt ſtrange things to our ears, we would know therefore what theſe things mean.* So it was with *Paul* at his firſt bringing home to God, *Acts*, 22. 6. *There ſhone a great light from Heaven about him, and he heard a voyce*, Saul, Saul, *why perſecuteſt thou me?* The thing was ſtrange, but what it was he could not tel, and therefore he makes yet further enquiry, *Who art thou Lord?* As the poor woman having heard the Miniſter preach out of that Text, *Iſai.* 27. 11. *They are a People of no underſtanding, therefore he that made them, will not ſave them*: he that created them, wil not ſhew mercy to them. It came ſo directly croſs to her own conceivings, that ſhe repaired to one of her neighbors, to know whether thoſe words were in the Scripture yea or no, and what thoſe Scriptures were: for ſaith ſhe, If he that made us wil not ſave us, Lord be merciful to us, who wil? who can? So theſe ſudden dazlings and dartings in of the Truth, forceth men to fall on queſtioning; enquire they do, come they wil, reſolve to hear more of thoſe ſtrange Novelties; and the greater ſearch they make, the greater certain Truth they perceive, the Law peremptory, the Word plain, threatnings certain, and the Lord juſt, his ſin moſt hainous, and his condemnation certain and approaching, ſo that he cannot tel how to avoid it, or how to bear it.

2. *Hence fear ſurprizeth him forthwith, purſues him with a reſtleſs expectation and ſuſpicion of what may*

befal him; I know what I have deſerved, and I hear what the Word hath threatned againſt ſuch, and I know God is true, and cannot deny his Word nor himſelf, and he is juſt, and cannot but execute in his time what hath gone out of his mouth, hath not all Ages manifeſted this? the Experience of al men proved it undeniable? *Did ever any provoke the Lord and proſper?* Job, 9. 4. and can I in reaſon expect it ſhould be other and better with me, than it was with any that was ever before me? Can I be ſo ſottiſh to think that God ſhould ſend another Chriſt, deviſe other Scriptures, make a new Cauſey way, or a back door to bring ſuch a wretched rebel as I am to Heaven, contrary to his own Word and Will? God hath ſaid, *Wo to the wicked, it ſhall go ill with him*; who can ſay the contrary, and who can expect but he wil accompliſh what he hath ſaid? the Word excepts no man; what folly is it then that I ſhould except my ſelf? 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 12. *That all they might be damned that have pleaſure in unrighteouſneß*; If I take the ſame pleaſure, I muſt look for the ſame plagues, *Luke*, 13. 5. *Except ye repent, ye ſhal all likewiſe periſh*: If I be in that condition, I muſt expect the ſame condemnation, and be likewiſe accurſed and confounded, and caſt out from the preſence of the Lord: It's certain it will be ſo, and it's uncertain how ſoon it may be: What if God do? Who knows but God will? What if God ſhould pluck me out of the Land of the Living? I may truly, juſtly ſuſpect it may be ſo, and fear it will? When I lie down, I ſhal never riſe more; when I go forth, I ſhal never return more; when I depart from the houſe, I ſhould take my leave and never ſee Sabbath more, nor the Aſſembly of the Saints more: why may not my meat be my poyſon? my table my ruin? my bed my grave? all Creatures inſtruments of death to me, who have been an enemy to God: So that *their hearts begin to fail them for fear*, Luke, 21. 26. Thus the Jaylor under the ſence of his guilt came trembling,

Iſai. 3. 11.

All

Acts. 19. 27. *Adam* at the coming of the Lord into the garden *feared and fled.* *Gen.* 3. 10. this is the fruit of the ſpirit of bondage. *Rom.* 8. 15. and the diſtreſſed ſinner becomes as Paſhur *a terror to himſelf, Jer.* 20. 3. 4. the flying of a bird, the cracking of a leaf, the ſhadow of darkneſs and approach of the night like
Luke 12. the ſhadow of death; he knowes not but the devils may have received a commiſſion *this night ſhall they fetch away thy ſoul from thee,* and drag it down to hell.

3. *While the ſinner is thus fearing the evil that is deſerved, behold the feet of the officer now approaching to ſee preſent excution diſpatched, and therefore the Lord in the third place puts a commiſſion into the hand of Conſcience, really to attach and arreſt the ſoul of a ſinner, to faſten all thoſe curſes upon the ſoul, and to force it to feel the vennome of thoſe puniſhments, which were formerly threatned and feared.* That as it was ſaid to *Belſhazzar* when he was quaffing in his cups, and bowls of the Sanctuary, and the hand writing came out againſt him: the appearance of it affrighted him with the expectation of ſome direful evil; but the preſent execution of it uſhered in ruin upon him and his Kingdom. *Dan.* 5. 28. 30. So the Prophet, *to thee be it ſpoken, thou art weighed in the ballance and found too light, thy Kingdom is departed from thee.* So Conſcience as Gods officer comes to ſee preſent execution done, and therefore comes authoriſed as a ſerjeant to arreſt, as a witneſs to accuſe, as a judg to condemn; tells the ſoul thou art weighed in the ſcales of the Sanctuary, and found too light, thy doom is paſt, thy deſtiny is determined thy ſentence ſet down, and thy ſalvation is departed from thee, that which thou didſt fear is now befallen thee, and thou muſt feel it to thy wo, *Pſal.* 140. 11. *wickedneſs hunts the wicked man,* but it *overtakes them alſo* If Conſcience condemnes *God is greater than our Conſcience* and he condemnes much more. *His iniquities lay hold upon him that he is not able to look up.* Pſal.

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40. 14. thou hast feared the punishment of sin before man, and hast not feared to commit sin before God, and thus thou hast sealed up thy condemnation casting away the goodness of the Lord. *If thou doest evil, sin lyes at the dore.* *Gen.* 4.

Hence flowes in the fearful expression of the displeasure of the Almighty, the dreadful wrath of the Eternal, like the mighty waves of the Sea, overwhelm and sink the soul of the sinner in desperate discouragement.

There be 2 things in sin, 1 The filth of it. 2 the punishment that comes from it, the stayn in it and the sting and tartness of it, crosse to me, and crosse to God; cross to my honor and shames me, cross to my quiet and peace and troubles me, cross to my safety and destroyes me; And this second, the sinner is firstly most sensible of; the plague of sin first stings and stabs the heart. Because nature seeks its own preservation, and self love carryes al men readily and easily to provide for their own safety; And here sorrow begins usually when the Lord by the Ministry of Conscience awakened, encamps about the sinner with al the curses of his righteous law broken; besiegeth him with the armies of his indignation and his fierce wrath followes him at every turn. So that now where ever he is, which way so ever he turns himself his sins and plagues compass him about, on every side; If he look to heaven, he sees a just God there ready to destroy him, before him are his sins ready to accuse him, within him nothing but guilt to condemn him, below him hell opening her mouth prepared to receive him, and the Devils at hand to torment his wretched soul as soon as it shal depart out of his body. And now behold that pale face, those weak hands, and feeble knees that the poor creature becomes not worth the ground he goes on a burden to himself and weary of his life; The Lord dishes out his sins and plagues to him on the table where he eats, writes them upon the tester of the bed whres he lyes

lyes his preſſures and miſeries become unſupportable and unſufferable: and were it not that God ſuſtaines with one hand as he beats him with the other; *A wounded Conſcience no man can bear*; Hence it is in ſuch horror men betake themſelves to the pit, to the knife, to the halter, rather chooſe not to be, then to be ſo miſerable; In theſe perplexities the ſinner as a man under his burden would ſhift ſhoulder, try al concluſions, turn every ſtone, wind every way, if any way he could get eaſe or relief. And if the counſel of carnal friends can leſſen the trouble, company allay it, falſe reaſonings of his own vain mind abate it, time and continuance wear out the terror, his confeſſions and reformations put in bayl upon his Conſcience, and quiet it, or ſome falſe miſtakes of pardon, and mercy heal the wound, (he walks in a wily way how to ſerve ſin and yet God too, how to keep in with the truth upon ſome fayr tearms and yet attend his own ends) the man is where he was, returnes to his ould ſinful diſtempers, *and the latter end proves worſe than the beginning*, he dyes in the birth. Thus millions of men periſh, go within the view of Canaan, and never poſſeſs it, caſt away in the very haven, within the ſight of land, and never arrive.

Prov. 18. 14.

Math. 12. 45.

4. *But he whom God loves he wil not leave here*; & though his hand be upon the ſore, and his eye upon the ſting and terror, the plagues and judgments that are daily before his eye, *the Lord wil force him to look further, to ſee and feel ſomething more, and worſe than ever yet he found, before he have done with him*; therefore he makes the wound deeper, reſts not before he be at the root of the heart quite through, comes to the very quick and ſees the bottom; Hence the Lord leads the ſoul from the terror and ſting of ſin, to view the ſtayn and filth of it, which was more deer to the ſoul than its own ſafety, and yet worſe to the ſoul than al the miſery and vexation that could befal it. Open here a little; There

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is something in the wil above the natural or physical being of it, look at its being meerly as it ariseth from the power of those natural principles, whereof its made; there is something above these and so better then these, unto which these are subject and subordinate; namely those divine principles of grace which were at the first imprinted upon it, and by which those natural abilities should be carried beyond their physical being to close with God and so attayn an eternal, and in that sence a supernatural happiness, I say in that sence supernatural though it was *Naturæ debitum*, because *Adam* should not, nay could not please God, put forth such a divine act out of the faculties of understanding and wil for, then the damned in Hel now might please him, for their natural faculties stil remain but it was as they were acted and carryed by the image of God, wisdom, holiness and righteousness that were bestowed upon them. So that these principles of grace in the wil, were above the wil, and better than the natural being of it.

Since the fal of *Adam* original corruption is come into the place and room of that original righteousness, and by a Soveraignty of power takes possession of the heart and wil so(and so the whol man) rules it, carryes it, captivates it, in subjection and subordination to it self So that to a son of *Adam* now in the state of sin, corruption exerciseth a soveraign power and command over the wil, and is better to the sinner than his natural being, corrupt self is of more power, and more neer and intimate to the soul then natural self; Hence the souldier wil rather loose his life than take the lye, he wil fight for it, and dye for it, his honor is nearer to his heart than his being; thus the Ambitious among the heathen; the desire of vain glory amongst the Jesuites that they may be canonized for Saints, makes them put their necks into the halter; And a corrupt heart wil loose Christ, and ordinances and safety and life and al rather than not satisfy his own humor. So Saul, *kill me that*

1 Sam. 31. 4. *it may not be sayd the uncircumcised Slew me* after he had been dead he would never have felt the disgrace, but his ambitious humor was more dear than his blood.

When the blow reacheth hither then ye are come to the root of the heart, and the heart is pierced quite through when the heart and the power of corruption are parted. Therefore when the Lord intends to make through work with a poor wretch whom he hath upon the rack, in his horror and perplexities there he holds him; he shal not go or get from hence before he go further and forceth the sinner to further consideration; If it be so why am I thus, thou lookest upon hel and the torments thereof as loathsom and fearful, what are thy sins then that deserve these, thou viewest thy plagues which are direful and unsufferable, what are thy sins then that procure these, Sayes the Lord. *Psal.* 107. 17. *Foolish men are plagued because of their transgressions.* Psal. 38. 8. *there is no quietness in my bones by reason of my sin,* Jer. 4. 18. *thy sins and iniquities have brought these, therefore thy wickedness is bitter, because it reacheth unto the heart* Hither the Lord brings and here keeps the soul; *my sins are before me. Psal.* 51. 3. he leaves the thoughts of his punishment and turns his eye to the power of his distemper, and the distance that they work between God and his soul. Here Satan bestirs him that he may darken the way of the distressed sinner and deceive him by some wily fetch; And therefore he deviseth how he may shift shoulder, and change his habitation, and not be thrust wholly out, And therefore he is wel content to gratify the sinner here, that he should look upon some sin that is attended with shame, and loathsom to the light of nature to the dictates of the common principles of natural conscience, and there he wil suffer him to lay on load and to follow it with great fierceness and indignation that so when the heart is come to a calm, and the storm is over he may take aside with some lesser evils that he may but color them over with the pretence of religion

ligion; thus many men have changed their special corruptions, not truly parted with them, and for the while have fallen short of this through sorrow. The Devil doth with sin as great men with their houses, they have their winter houses and their summer houses, and they remain there where they have most conveniency and suitableness; so when a mans speicial sin of his constitution hath fallen, and the parties have conceived the day is theirs, their hearts have been truly broken; when the Devil onely alters his habitation, they grow to be disobedient servants and sharp wives and that under pretence of Religion; the servant must go pray when he should go to work, his Master is a carnal man: the wife froward and perverse, her husband wants the power of Religion, why should she look at him? and this upon mine own knowledg, hath discovered the falsness and hath been a means to many to begin again, and to make through work, therefore the Lord follows the soul afresh, that it must *feel sin as sin and therefore every sin* and else none truly. *Cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the law. Gal.* 3. 10. there must not be great breaches, but no breaches, not gross sins but no sin, that God wil bear or we should keep; knowest thou not sayes *Saul* to *Jonathan* that *as long as the son of* Jsha *remaines alive, thou wilt never be established.* 1 *Sam.* 20. 31. So Conscience to the soul that as long as the league & life of any of these distempers concontinu, doest thou not know, thou wilt never, thou canst never be established in the kingdom of grace; Nay the sinner beginns now to reason with himself why was I born, why came I into the world? wherein consists my good or what is my hapiness? is it not to please God, to be one with him, and happy in so being; should I carry this proud stubborn, rebellious heart to heaven with me, heaven would be a hell to me, and I a devil in it. Now however this work be thus punctually in the several parts of it discovered; and however it is even in

ſpecial diſtances many times thus alſo enſtamped upon that foul. Yet the Lord doth bind himſelf to leave ſuch plain tracks and footſteps of proceedings with a poor creature at al times, and therefore we muſt not limit the holy one of Iſrael to be at our allowance and liking, or confine him to the compaſs of our conceits and deſires. Therefore it pleaſeth the Lord to diſpenſe himſelf in a divers manner in dealing with divers ſinners, and thoſe we ſhal ad in a word.

2. *Somtimes then in the ſecond place, the Lord ſuddenly ſets on the blow, and leaves mighty and prevailing impreſſions at the very preſent, ſpeedily and unexpectedly goes through ſtich with the work, pierceth the ſoul through at one thruſt.* Sometimes at one ſermon, may be in the handling of one point, nay ſome one ſentence, or ſome ſpecial truth, the Lord is pleaſed to arme it and diſcharge it, with mighty power and uncontroulable evidence, that it aſtoniſheth and ſhivereth the heart of the ſinner al in pieces; As it is in the diſcharge of a piece it may be one ſcattred ſhot or ſplinter hitts and kils when al the reſt miſs; ſo with the ſplinter of a truth when directed aright, God lets in ſo much of the amazing beauty of his own holineſs and purity, the dreadfulneſs of his diſpleaſure, and the infinite croſſneſs in himſelf to the leaſt corruption, and conſequently that abhorred loathſomneſs in the nature of ſin even the ſmalleſt, that look as it is with terrible thunder and lightning, it melts al before it, and that moſt where there is oppoſition againſt it even the league that is between the heart and the luſt, ſoakes into the very root of the ſoul; and hence under ſuch a ſudden thunderclap, ſuch mauling blowes now and then, the ſinner dyes and faints away under it in the very place where he ſits, ſometimes roars out as one that hath received his deaths wound in his boſom, and that he hath heard his doom, and was delivered up into the hands of the Devil ready to drop into the dungeon, and to be carried poſt to the bottomleſs pit; and

and such soul sinking and confounding terrors, which takes off a serious and judicious consideration of the evil assaulting, they vanish away for the most part and come to little or nothing when the tartness of the horror is once allayed; But sometimes lastly the sinner takes in the truth kindly and contains himself, hath his load as much as his heart can bear, for the while as much as life and soul can hold together, goes away, droops and buckles under his burden, steps into a solitary place and hangs the wing as a foul that is shot; the saving truth thus set on lyes gnawing and eating at the heart blood of a sinner, (as *aqua-fortis* doth in iron) leaves it not until it eat asunder the league betwixt the lust and the heart. Thus this lively truth in the soul like strong physick in the bowels walks up and down the world with a man, is working night and day, he cannot avoyd the evidence and light of it, he cannot lessen nor hinder the operation of it. Now he questions with this or that Christian, then resolves to speak to such a Minister and to reveal his whol condition and to crave his counsel; he is often going and turns back again, almost at the dore and yet goes away again, sometimes enters into speech and his heart misgives him, he pretends another business and departs again; Al this while the soul bleeds inwardly, the truth is stirring, and the physick working, til at last it over-bids the darling distemper, then the coast is clear, the heart growes to more liberty and his speech more free; Thus *Paul* expresseth Gods manner of proceeding with the Corinthian Convert, 1 *Cor.* 14. 29. when the word is dispensed in plainness there comes in one unlearned and unbeleeving, he is convinced of al and judged of al, *i.e.* the evidence of the word convinceth him and judgeth him & his estate and it followes *the secrets of his heart are made manifest*, those retired and privy haunts of sin in the soul are discovered, so he wil fal down and say *God is in you of a truth*, He saw more of God, and his Majesty and purity, more of his own sin and

and the filthy puddle of his own distempers; it was the Wisdom of God to discover those hid things of darkness, and brought the loathsomness of them to light; it was the Holiness of God that shews the hainous and hellish Poyson thereof; it was the power of God that did conquer the prevailing Dominion of these distempers unto which the heart was subject. And this was the Lords dealing with *Paul*, he assaults the main hold and strength of his rebellion, and drives him at the first dash as it were to look where the loathsomness of his evil lay. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus*: thou persecutest that Jesus that came to redeem thee, oppossest that Grace that would sanctifie and bring thee to Glory, trampest upon that blood that would free thee from the guilt and curse which thou hast brought upon thy self; thus lastly it was with *Job* in that new Conversion (as I may say) that the Lord wrought in him, *Job*, 42. 4, 5. *I have oft heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes see thee, I abhor my self in dust and ashes*; when God lets in a sight of himself, and a sight of sin, from thence the soul begins not to abhor his plagues and punishments which the other feels or fears, he abhors not Hell and the torments thereof, but abhors himself, the pollutions, and impurity of his own soul, which are worse than al the everlasting burnings of the bottomless pit; and hence is that Phrase, *Ezek.* 36. 32. *They shall loath themselves*, not their miseries, though they were more than they could bear; not their Judgments, though heavier than they could endure, but they loath their own souls, the hellish exorbitations, swervings and departings of heart from God, that they had held any connivence or correspondence with their lusts.

3. Lastly, *God's manner of Dispensation, in sweet and secret, and works insensibly upon the spirits of such who do receive it, when and how it seems best to his infinite Wisdom, whose waies are indeed past finding out.* Rom. 11. 33. He

He can and doth sometimes, *sanctifie the soul in the womb*, as it's commonly conceived he did *John Baptist*, Luke, 1. 44. 1.

Many times he begins to tamper and trade with the spirits of his, when they are yong and tender, and their yeers few, drops in some grain of the immortal Seed of the Word, which takes root by the powerful operation of the Spirit, and grows up with them as they grow in yeers, 2 *Chron.* 34. 3. *While* Josiah *was yet yong, at eight yeers old he began to seek after the God of his Fathers, and declined not to the right hand, or to the left*; So the Lord seemed to deal with *Joseph*, and to reveal himself to him, and to *Samuel* very yong, at about fourteen yeers. 2.

Somtimes God keeps his by the strokes of his common Graces, restraining from scandalous evils, and constraining by means appointed and blessed to that end, the holy endeavors, the counsels and examples of Godly Parents, the society of such who are holy, the power of the Ordinances under which they are bred and brought up, toling and tilling of their hearts and affections by many moral perswasions, to the love and liking of the excellency of a holy course, which he knows how to present, and by which to draw out the exercise of all those moral abilities they are endued withal, and at the last insensibly, and yet truly plucks them off from the root of old *Adam*, and implants into the true Vine Christ Jesus; *Lidia* and *Zacheus* are Presidents of Gods proceeding in this case; whence it is that many a godly man and true Convert, never knew the time of his Conversion, only he knows he was blind, and God hath brought him to see the wonders of his way and Truth. 3.

Only a Three-fold Caution is here to be attended.

Though the manner of Gods dealing be divers, and degrees of this work of Contrition differ in most, yet 1.

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the Nature and ſubſtance of the work is really and truly wrought in all that are effectually called out of the world, themſelves, and ſins to the Lord Jeſus; as ſhall after appear when we come to give in the Evidences of the Point in hand; only now it ſhal ſuffice to propound theſe two places, *Mal.* 3. 1. *Behold I will ſend my Meſſenger, and he ſhal prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye ſeek, ſhall ſuddenly come into his Temple*; and this preparation his Harbenger *John* Baptiſt diſcovers, *Luke*, 3. 5. *Every mountain ſhal be brought low, and the valleyes filled, crooked things made ſtraight, and rough things plain, and then all fleſh ſhal ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.* And the evidence of this appears in the queſtion they made, *What ſhal we do? &c.* It's Gods way of entertainment which himſelf preſcribes, *Rev.* 3. 2. *Behold I ſtand at thee door and knock; if any man will open the door, I and my Father will come in to him, and ſup with him.* Unleſs the door be opened, there is no expectation of Chriſts coming, and ſupping: now all men are *ſhut up under unbelief*, and ſo the power of their ſins; the opening of the heart, is the looſening of the ſoul from the league of theſe luſts, which is done by Contrition; true, a man may pick the lock, or break the lock, open the door and lift up the latch gently, or elſe unhinge it with violence, and noiſe, that al the houſe, and al the town may hear, but it's opened both waies.

2. *Though a man truly called, happily cannot tell the time of his Converſion, yet every one ſhould, and if gracious, he can give ſuch proper and ſpecial evidence, ſuch never failing and infallible fruits of this work, that they may undoubtedly diſcover to others, and aſcertain to his own ſoul, that the ſtroke is ſtruck indeed*, that he hath been called out of the world, and from darkneſs to his marvelous light, that the Lord hath broken his heart kindly, or elſe he cannot be aſſured he wil ever bind him up with his ſaving and healing compaſſions.

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It's a safe way to view over these primitive and first impressions of the Lord upon the soul, and a principle of Grace received to renew and act over dayly these first Editions, and Spiritual Dispositions imprinted upon the heart: they were first wrought upon us but after Grace received, they may & should be renewed by us, we should act them over again: This is the Advice and Direction which our Savior so seasonably and so sadly leaves upon record upon the Conscience of his Disciples: When *Peter* was forewarned of his fall and denyal of his Master, he also leaves this Receipt with him, for his recovery after the wound taken, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren*, Luke, 22, 32. *Peter* was converted long before, and called effectually unto Christ, and by faith made one with him; and this faith he did not, nay could not lose, for *Christ prayed his faith should not fail*: but in our fals, there is a weakening and blemishing of this work of Conversion, and an aversion in some measure left upon the soul, therefore we should labor a new Conversion, *i. e.* renew and act over the work of Conversion, be broken hearted, humbled, drawn to Christ afresh; and as necessary as the renewal of the act of faith, is the repairing and renewing of these acts also, for there is no going to Christ, if we go not out of sin and self. Hence again our Savior, when he would take off, and reform that ambitious humor which had vented it self among the Disciples, when each man strove to be highest, one at the right hand, another at the left, the rest they disdained this haughty pang; our Savior applies this Receipt to cure this corruption, *Mat.* 18. 2. 3. *Jesus called a little Child, and set him in the midst of them, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, unless ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shal not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*: The Disciples were called, and so converted, truly, savingly humbled, and yet they must renew and act over again these first impressions of the powerful operations of the

Math. 18. 3.

Spirit of God, be broken hearted, loosened from thy lusts as at the first, be abased and brought to nothing in thine own sence and apprehension as at the first, be drawn to Christ as at the first; and there is more reason and greater necessity of this, than men are readily aware of. For,

1. *A wound here is never recovered in any following work upon the soul, unless we go back, and begin again; miss here, and we miss all, spoil all our proceedings in progress of the Work of Grace:* He that enters not at the right gate, the faster he goes, the further out of his way: Never loosened and divorced from the league with some darling lust, thou canst not be Espoused to Christ, therefore not called, therefore not justified, nor sanctified, nor glorified; thy reformations are false, thy peace counterfeit, and al thy comforts thou conceit'st thou hast, they are meer forgeries and delusions; thou art fast in the Devils clutches as long as thou hast thy sins, he hath thee at command. The Mettal that is not melted, there is no making, polishing, perfecting any Vessel for any use with it.

2. *Cleer this, cleer all,* i. e. we make way for the Evidences that appertain to our comfort and spiritual condition in our whol course: mark al the recoylings of our Consciences, the misgiving of our hearts, the staggering and doubting of the Truth of Gods Work, or the assurance of Gods Love, they turn still upon this hinge, here they fortifie; Oh the lusts I brought with me from my Cradle, the old haunt of heart, the old sin, therefore I am the old man still. Here the main knot, and the great Question remains still.

3. *The looking over, and skilful discerning of these first impressions left upon us, may, nay in truth will stand by us, and relieve us in the darkest daies of our greatest distresses,* & we may find some foot-hold here, when al the rest seem to be gone from us, to our own sence & apprehension. It's Gods usual way many times to put his Servant

vant to it, as he tried *Abraham*, to make them sacrifice their *Isaacs*, even to burn the Evidences and pledges he hath given them for the performance of the Covenant, and established their hearts therein. For *Isaac* was all the pledg that the Lord had given, *That in his Seed, all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*: now he commands him to cast his Evidence into the fire, brings him to his beginnings, *Gen.* 22. 1, 2. So the Lord doth often with his: Enlargements fail, the heart is dead, their Graces bed-rid, their peace disturbed, their assurance gone; so that they find nothing, feel nothing in their own sence and apprehension, all is in the ashes; God begins with them upon the bare board, as we say, they sit down with a heart yielding and melting, a heart burdened with sin, though it cannot disburden it self, a heart loosened from his lusts, willing that God should remove them, though he cannot subdue them.

The Second thing to be opened is,

The Second thing to be opened.

How God sets on this Sorrow, and makes the soul to feel sin its greatest evil, when Naturally it finds greatest content in it.

OR,

How it's possible that the soul now wholly possessed with sin, can be made to feel the weight of sin as to be severed from it, where there is no room for a habit in the subject, there can be no work of a habit; for habits of Grace and sin work so far as they be in their subject, and have support from the subjects in which they be: Corruption must be in the heart, before it carry and command the heart; Grace must be in the soul, before it can act and quicken the soul to its work. Now how the soul should come to feel, and be loosened from it's corruption, when there is nothing in it but corruption,

when God comes to work upon it, how doth God bring this about?

If by Sorrow a man be loosened from sin, then it must have this sorrow before it be loosened, because it is an effect of it. If so, then it must have a gracious frame, and be possessed with the presence of Grace, when it's wholly possessed with sin, which cannot be.

Answ. I Answer: In these Secrets and depths of Gods Spiritual Dispensations with the souls of men, we must learn *to be wise to sobriety*, and adore the waies of God which are too wonderful for us; and if any paths of his Providence in an ordinary course are beyond our ken, and past finding out, I suppose his complyings with the consciences and hearts of men in their Conversion, are some of the chief. It's of our Natural Birth *David* speaks, *Psal.* 139. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*, much more may it be said of our new birth: The wise man, *Eccles.* 11. 5. saies, *As thou knowest not the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with Child, so thou knowest not the Works of God*, nor of his Spirit, how he fashions the frame of the mind and heart of him he wil bring home to himself; curious we should not be, careless we must not be. I shal leave therefore some such few Expressions, so far as my light goes, and occasion the judicious to consider further, for the further cleering of Gods Work.

That which I shal say here for the Answer and Explication of the Second thing, I shal cast into several conclusions, because I conceive that is the easiest and openest way to help the weak.

Conclus. 1. *In a right sence it may be truly said, that sin is truly cross and opposite to the Nature of the soul, and the greatest evil that doth or can befal us*: I say, opposite to the Nature of the soul in a right sense: Look at the soul in respect of the end for which it was created, and that impression which is enstamped and left upon it unto this

this day, whereby it's restlesly carried in the search, and for the procurement of that good for which it was made, though it miss the right discerning of what it is, and falls short in the attainment of it. The soul was made for an end, and good, and therefore for a better than it self, therfore for God, therfore to enjoy union with him, and communion with those blessed excellencies of his, so far as they are communicable, and it were capable; this impression remains still upon the soul, though the work thereof is wholly prejudiced, and it self disappointed wholly of that good which would satisfie the desires thereof, and it misseth. But being possessed with sin, the Judgment is blinded and deluded that it mistakes utterly, and perceives not this good, and so pursues other things in the room of it, yet restless and unsatisfied in what it hath, and attains, but it hath not that for which it was made; thus *Paul* speaks of the Romans, *Rom.* 2. 14. *Being without the Law, they shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conscience excusing or accusing*; this ever appears in the heart corrupt, *I was for a better*; the ambitious man he seeks his Honor, Covetous man the World, he gets the booty, and yet is not satisfied in that which he gets; I want something better, and that which should satisfie, and yet this doth not satisfie. And because they know no better than these, and are not satisfied with these, therefore they are restlesly carried after more of these vain things, more Honor, more Wealth, more Pleasure; the mind blinded, and the heart poysed and poysoned with them, it sees no other by what light, and is carried to no other by the power and principles it hath. This is the reason the Apostle *Peter* gives, why carnal hearts cannot see spiritual things, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. *Because they are blind, and cannot see afar off.* Supernatural and spiritual things are far off, and blind men cannot reach them, because they want the light, help, and power of the Spirit, and the Graces thereof.

Hence

Hence the reaſon follows.

That which croſſeth the end and good of the ſoul for which it was made; that is ſo far contrary to the nature of the ſoul and the greateſt evil that can befal it.

But ſin as ſuch, and ſuch, and that onely croſſeth the end and greateſt good of the ſoul.

Concluſ. 2. *If ſin in the venome and pollution of it were diſcovered, and brought home effectually to the nature of the ſoul, it might be made ſenſible thereof and deeply affected and burdened therewith*; this followes undeniably from the former. That which carryes the croſſneſs of the greateſt evil to the nature of the ſoul were it but ſo ſeen did it but ſo act upon the ſoul, it would affect it with the greateſt grief and burden; for ſorrow in al the proportions of it iſſues from theſe two grounds. A croſſneſs of an evil truly apprehended by the judgment: & the venome acting really upon us; where theſe are in a greater or leſſer meaſure; there ſorrow is greater or leſs; upon this ground the Apoſtle evidenceth the grief and burden of the creature *Rom.* 8. 22. *For we know that the whol creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and that becauſe it was made ſubject to vanity*, and this is their vanity becauſe their end is croſſed, and ſo their good is hindred: for wheras it is their deſire to ſerve ſuch as may ſerve God, when they ſerve the humors, and corruptions of carnal men, they become vain and miſs their end, and ſo their good, and this is, as it were a grief to them. Were the venome of ſin but diſcovered and acted upon the nature of the ſoul it could not but groan under the evil and vanity thereof as that which wholy deprives it of its end and good.

Concluſ. 3. *While the ſoul ſtands fully under the power of corruptions poſſeſſed with it and acted by it, it's not poſſible it ſhould apprehend the evil of ſin, nor the nature of the ſoul taſt the venome thereof.* Sin carryes no croſſneſs of oppoſition of evil to it ſelf, and therefore no diſquiet to it ſelf, and ſo no ſeparation from it ſelf. But ſin wholly

wholly poſſeſſing and wholly acting the ſoul it makes the mind and heart apprehend, not according to the nature of the ſoul and impreſſion left upon it when created but according to the diſtemper by which it is poſſeſſed, and carried. So did they to *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 8. 19. *they ſaid, nay but we wil have a King* Jer. 18. 12. So they to *Jeremiah, we wil walk every one in the imagination of his own heart.* Give the ſick man the moſt pleaſant potion though the Phyſitian profeſs it, and give reaſons, and others by experience find it ſo, he no ſooner taſts it but he puts it away, as that which is exceeding bitter, becauſe his taſt is corrupted, and tongue furred with the foulneſs of his ſtomack he relliſheth the drink not according to what they ſay and what it is, or what the natural conſtitution of the palate would perſwade, but what his diſtemper which now poſſeſſeth and diſordreth his taſt, tel him. So it was with Judas, though he was told before, that it were better he had never been born, that would not do the deed, his covetous heart found another relliſh, nay when he flung away his money out of vexation, yet he relliſhed his murther ſtil, and therefore hanged himſelf. And this is the reaſon why they who ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt even againſt the evidence of reaſon, the corruption of their heart relliſheth other than reaſon tells.

Hence the Lord Chriſt by the irreſiſtible power of his ſpirit doth countermand the authority of ſin; makes it appear that its commiſſion is come to an end, the date of it is expired. Namely ſin after *Adam* withdrawing himſelf received a commiſſion from divine juſtice, that ſince the ſoul would not be ruled by him and his law. It ſhould be poſſeſſed and acted by corruption; the date of the commiſſion laſts until the Lord Jeſus the ſecond *Adam* who undertakes for the ſinner comes by covenant to take the ſoul to himſelf; and then he appearing in this behalf, ſin is forced back, and not to exerciſe her power, and then the evil of ſin is brought home *Concluſ.* 4.

home to the soul and set on with the ful venome of it, and the nature of the soul is made sensible of it, I say made sensible and deeply affected therewith; This me thinks is the binding of the strong man, *Matth.* 12. 29. *Wherby the Devills armour* that is his commission by vertue of which he holds the soul *is taken away from him* stopp the sluice and stream that drives the mil, and then you turn the wheel another way which otherwise while under the sourse of the stream cannot be turred. Thus *God commands the soul to return from iniquity Job.* 36. 10. And if he do but stop the commission for a sudden turn, then there may follow a tast which such as sin against the holy Ghost may have of whom the Apostle speaks *Hebr.* 6. 4, 5, 6.

Conclus. 5. *The Lord Jesus by the virtu of his death puts an end to the commission that divine justice gave, & disanuls the right and power that sin challenged and by which it acted the soul of a sinner, wherby it kept the soul under its command that no means could work upon it or be made effectual to it.* 1. Pet. 3. 18. *Christ dyed for us that he might bring us to God.* For when *Adam* (and so we in him) wilfully departed from God & would not be guided by his righteous law and just wil; divine justice gave a commission to sin to take vengeance of the soul, and keep it under, that no good may come to it or it receive any; now Christ by his death having satisfyed justice the commission is cancelled, there is nothing on Gods part which hinders; And there is nothing on our parts can hinder, the authority of sin is disannulled, his claym made voyd; that soul is mine saies Christ, hands off satan, hands off sin; the claym answered, authority disannulled, power stopped, now there is way for light to come to the mind; and for the nature of sin as discovered to be set on upon the soul, and it made to feel the venom thereof, as upon those termes it may, *ut supra.* So our Saviour *Rev.* 1. 18. *I was dead but am alive, and I have the keyes of hell and death. i.e.* hath supream

supream authority to shoot back al boules to open al dores. As the first *Adam* by natural generation hatd power and commission from divine justice to turn the souls of his children from God to sin, so the second *Adam* having satisfyed and answered divine justice, hath power to turn the soul from satan and sin to God; satan and sin are at his devotion, the soul at his command

The third particular to be opened.

How far the soul is or may be truly said to be active in this work of Contrition, or this spiritual sorrow, when it comes to receive the right impression of it for sin as such: 3.

The Answer may be conceived in the following particulars.

There is no power in man to remove that resistance that is in his heart against God & the work of his grace; that which out of its own corrupt principles doth wholly resist and cannot but resist, the operation and dispensation of al spiritual means, that would prevayl with it for good, that cannot take away the resistance; *for resistance* cannot take away *resistance*; it implyes a palpable contradiction, as that which is professedly cross to common sence; but the corrupt heart of a natural man while he is in the state of nature, and corruption, doth and cannot but wholly resist, the work of Gods spirit and grace and al the saveing operations of al the means thereof. *The flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these two are contrary* Gal. 5. 17. *And what is born of the flesh is flesh* John, 3. 7. that is the temper and inward constitution of a soul in its natural condition, its wholly born of the flesh, and therefore nothing but flesh, and therefore can do nothing but resist the spirit; yea it cannot but 1.

oppose what ever would take that resistance away; for it's a received rule of reason and confessed of al hands, every thing desires the preservation of it self, and its being, otherwise the being and the causes that made up the being should be cross to the thing, if it should endeavor its own destruction, nay a thing should be opposite to it self; Hence it is that the corruption of the heart wil put forth al the skil & strength it hath or by the contrivements of carnal reason, can compass to fortify & preserve it self against the spiritual and saving dispensation of the work of Gods spirit in his own ordinances, because wicked men look at the power thereof as that which works the ruin of their lusts; therefore they labor to avoyd the light if they can, if not that, to oppose it, and overbear it by their delusions, if not that, to destroy it; they wil not hear the truth, or gainsay, what they hear, or abhor and loath what they cannot many times gainsay, nay endeavour to destroy what they so hate and are tormented withal, *The wisdom of the flesh cannot be subject to the law. Rom.* 8.7. the heart riseth up in armes, and indignation against the soul-saving and uncontroulable evidences of the truth, they wil not be ruled by the holiness of it, and they cannot endure the terror and Majesty of it. As sometimes the Philystians dealt with the Ark when it came into the field, they thus spake one to another there was *never such a thing heard of as this, these are the Gods that destroyed the Egiptians in the red Sea, quit your selves like men, Oh yee Philystins, that ye be not servants to the Hebrewes,* They say of the word as sometimes of our Saviour. *Math.* 21. *this is the Heyr come let us kill him, and the inheritance shal be ours,* they cannot have their lusts so long as the power of the word would overtop and cross them, therefore *Herodias* prefers *John* Baptists head before half the Kingdom, that she might be quiet in her sins.

2. Before the soul can act against the evil of sin or for the removal of this resistance wherein the destroying venom

venom of sin lyes, and that which stops the passage of the power of the ordinance & the work of Grace, *It's necessary that the Lord should not only concur with the work of the wil of a sinner to lead or draw forth the act thereof which he hath ability to expreß, but he must let in an influence of the spiritual power & vertue into the faculty of the wil, whereby it may be enabled to put forth an act unto which it formerly it had no power of it self*; It's a subtile pang of Pelagianism and the Arminians som of their successors have licked up that loathsom heresy of theirs at this day: & by this delusion & cunning pretence of theirs they would color over those rotten and poysonful conceits; & hence it is they labor to bear men in hand, that they labor to set forth and exalt the honour of Gods free grace, they profess that without the preventing grace of God, mans free wil and al that ability he hath left in nature since the fal is able to do no spiritual good. The words are fayr but the intent is falſ and deceitful, and indeed they do privily and cunningly undermine the work of Gods grace while they pretend indeed to advance it. For the meaning is this. God must enlighten mens minds and reveal the things of life and happiness to mens wils, excite, stir up and cal forth their hearts to the embracing of that which is good, and concur with him in their endeavors to the performance of the work or else they can do nothing, so that upon this grant, Gods free grace in the work of conversion, cals forth and concurs with that act which mans free wil hath sufficiency to put forth, which is to make man share with God in his work, and to part stakes with him.

But the truth is this, The Lord must let in an influence of some special motion and operation and leave some impression of spiritual power upon the wil to enable it to act, not onely to concur with the act thereof. God gives a man ability whereby he may wil, doth not concur with him by assistance and providence when he wills as *one in whom we live and move.*

Of the first of these it's true which many of the Antients speak, God works without us, many things in us, *i. e.* unto which we being in no causal ability at al, God gives us ability to do that which is pleasing and spiritual, to the obtaining whereof, we had no causal ability of our own; when the Lord Christ raised *Lazarus* now dead and smelling in the Grave, he did not concur with the action and motion of his Soul in rising out of the Grave, but without any causal concurrence or help of *Lazarus*, he put a soul into his body, whereby he was enabled to stir and move. So it is with a soul dead in sins and trespasses, when the mind and will have no ability for any spiritual act, not able to take off that deadness and indisposition that is there, the Lord without the will, without any causal concurrence of it, lets in ability into it for the work, and concurs with it in the work. So *Paul* expresseth this manner of Gods Work, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *He causeth light to shine out of darkness*, he gives light and being out of darkness, without the help of light, and then concurs with the light in the shining of it, God lets in an Influence to the will, not only lends a concurrence to the work.

3. *The Influence of this spiritual Power whereby the Lord takes away this sinful resistance, is not by any gracious habit of sanctification, but by an irresistable motion of the work of his spirit upon the soul: By a gracious habit of Sanctification*, I mean those spiritual Graces of *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, *Righteousness*, in which *Adam* at first was created, and according unto which, al the Elect and called are *renewed according to the Image of him that created them*, Eph. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10. these gracious habits are so many Spiritual and Supernatural Principles as it were left in the soul, whereby it is in a state of Life and Grace, and liberty and free will to any good; and therefore as those that are Agents by Counsel, they are beginners of their own work, can act or not act, can act more or less according to their own choyce:

And

And I follow the Apprehenſion of thoſe Authors who conceive that the removal of this reſiſtance is not by any gracious habit of Sanctification, but by the irreſiſtible motion of the work of the Spirit; and therefore they cal it *Actual Grace*, the other *Habitual*: A work of the Spirit aſſiſting, the other a work of the Spirit inhabiting, or dwelling in the heart; the one a Principle of Grace in us which we have from communion with Chriſt; the other the work of the Spirit upon us, to bring us from our ſins to union with the Lord Jeſus; and that upon theſe grounds:

All Habits (as it is in the Nature of all qualities) have their being in their Subjects, before they work in their Subject: Reaſon and Nature teacheth and preſuppoſeth he muſt have skil before he can uſe it, gain the knowledg of an Art before he can work by it; I cannot do the work of the Trade, alas I have no skil, nor ever was brought up to it; for take the heart according to the condition in which we now look at a ſinner, it's wholly under the power of reſiſtance, carried in total oppoſition againſt God, and al the works of his Grace; and therefore conſider him in this time and turn, and go no further, there is no room, or next capability of a gracious habit or ſpiritual Principle to be there, therefore it cannot work there, *The Natural man doth not receive the things of the Spirit of God, nay he cannot do it*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The World cannot receive the Comforter*, John, 14. 21. 1.

Where there is a capability to receive, there is ſome kind of conſent and agreement, but ſo as yet it cannot be here in a heart faſtened to its luſts; where there is a total oppoſition, there is no fit diſpoſition to receive, but while the ſoul is under the power of this reſiſtance, there is a total oppoſition, and therefore there can be no conſenſion.

Again Secondly, All gracious Habits of Sanctification are part of the Image which we receive from the Second 2.

cond *Adam*, 1 Cor. 15. 49. *As we have born the Image of the first* Adam, *so shall we also bear the Image of the second* Adam, and so also part of our Spiritual communion with Christ, *of whose fulness we receive Grace for Grace*, John, 1. 16. *and are transformed from one degree of glorious Grace to another*, 2 Cor. 3. last.

1. All Communion presupposeth Union; no sap in the Branches, unless growing to the Tree; no life in the Member, unless united to the Head, *John*, 15. 4. *Unless ye abide in me, ye can have nothing, do nothing*: Eph. 4. 15, 16. *Grows up in him in all things, who is our Head, by whom the Body aptly compacted together, according to the effectual working, &c.* First In-being then working.

2. No Union but by an Act, for no qualities close with their Object but by an Act. But now look at the soul in this present condition, as it comes to consideration in this place, as to have the resistance removed, and it self turned from sin, and in way to be turned to God. Should this be done by a gracious Habit? then there should be communion with Christ, before any union to him, or acting upon him, all which imply so many impossibilities, and cross the whol course of Gods Dispensation.

3. Those gracious Habits, when and wheresoever they be in any Subject, it becomes free (somtimes the actions thereof are suspended and cease, as in sleep) and then the act and order of things, is according to their own liberty in an indifferency; so that were either the resistance against the work of Grace to be removed, or the heart carried to God from hence, it were in our choyce to be converted, or not converted, whenas it hath been proved, our Conversion is wrought irresistably, and determined to one side, not issuing from the liberty of our choyce, and therefore it is brought about by the irresistible impression of the work of the Spirit: In a word,

to

to iſſue this Point, Look as it is in the will of every Son of *Adam*, when he comes to be averted, and turned from God to ſin in the courſe of Natural Generation; ſo it is in a right proportion in the will of every man begotten of the Second *Adam*, when he comes to be turned from ſin to God in Spiritual Converſion. Look at the will of a Child in the courſe of Natural Generation, as it is created by God, and comes holy and undefiled out of his hand; as the queſtion, How comes the will of the Child to be turned from God to ſin? it cannot be by any actual ſin of its own, it hath committed none; it cannot be by any corrupt quality firſt put into it, before it was turned from God, and by which, that turning aſide is wrought, for then it ſhould be under the power of ſin, while yet it is under the power of God. But by vertue of *Adams* ſin, and the Curſe that attends the breach of the Covenant, and by means of the next Parent in the work of Generation; the Body made wonderfully, and the Soul created holy by God, he as an unskilful workman, by the vertue of the Curſe, acting the work of Generation under the power of the Curſe, and power of a perverted will, turns the ſet of the Soul from God, joyns body and ſoul in a wrong and exorbitant manner; hence they come to be in a diſorderly frame, the wheels run wrong, under the power of original corruption, and ſtruck wrong by actual tranſgreſſion; ſo that there is the ſtrength of the Curſe, the puſh of Divine Juſtice, and the perverting ſtroke of the next Parent turns the ſoul from God to ſin, whence it comes to be wholly poſſeſſed and acted by corruption.

So it is by proportion in a contrary manner in the work of Converſion, when the Lord Jeſus comes to bring the ſinner home, he doth not put ſanctifying Grace into the heart, to bring the heart from the power and rebellion of ſin, for then it ſhould be under the power of Grace and ſin together; but by the mighty impreſſion and motion of his Spirit takes off the reſiſtance, and

and turns the soul from sin to himself in Christ, in whom accepting of it as adopted in his Son, he leaves the impression of his Image, and al gracious abilities whereby the heart may be carried towards him, and act for him in all things.

4. *In the removal of this resistance, for the conquering and overpowering this opposition, that a carnal heart naturally carries against God and his Grace, the will of the sinner it self is a meer Patient, and the soul is only a sufferer and acts not, but is acted upon*; for the heart and wil of a sinner being possessed and overpowered with corruption, that which is the subject of his corrupt quality, and acted by it, hath no power to expel it, that which is wholly carried by resistance, cannot wil to remove that resistance out of it, but in truth resists al that resists or oppoſeth that; only the Lord by the mighty impression of the powerful operation of Spirit over-bears that opposition in the soul, and forceth the soul to feel the stab and venom of sin, though it use all means and waies it can to avoid the stroak of it, but al in vain, for *the Arrows of the Almighty stick fast in him*: And all this is done, and may be without any prejudice to any Liberty that the Lord hath put into the will, for the will may be forced to suffer even against it's will, without any wrong to the liberty thereof, as the damned do in Hell at this day, and shal through all eternity, and shal never be able to get from under the terrors of the Almighty.

For the meaning of that received expression, *the Will cannot be compelled*, is this, In all the acts the Will puts forth, she is a cause by counsel, and acts from the inward power and ability that is implanted in her; to be compelled, is to act by constraining force from without: now for the will to act from her own power inwardly, and yet to be acted by a contrary power from without, are Contradictions. The will then (in a word) cannot be constrained to do, but it may be constrained to suffer,

suffer without any the least prejudice to liberty; and so it is here in this work I now mention, a meer sufferer.

Thus *Job*, 36, 10. The Lord said to *command men from iniquity*; he not only directs, but by a soveraign power carries the soul from iniquity: thus lamenting *Ephraim* intreats, *Jer.* 31. 18. *Turn me and I shall be turned, thou art the Lord my God:* And *Paul* was sent, *Acts*, 20. 18. *To turn men from darkness to light*; and so the whol frame of Scripture runs: they are said to be *wounded, burdened, pierced*, when they should avoid the blow, and remove the burden, were in their choyce, but they are pressed under the hand of the Lord, which they are not able to escape, though not able to undergo it: Hence it is that though by reason of the presence of the body of death that yet remains, there will be some stirrings of distemper, which wil raise up some mutinies and conspiracies against the work and preventing Grace of God, yet there will never be power nor possibility, so far to resist as to hinder the work of Conversion, and effectual bringing of the soul to God: As in an Army wholly defeated, and routed, and scattered, their Commanders slain, and strong Holds taken, and their Country possessed; though some roving Troops may happily pilfer and forage up and down here and there in secret, when they are not observed; yet they are never able to make head, or come into the Field. So here.

Lastly, When this resistance is removed, and the right, power and challenge which sin made, disanulled, *the soul comes yet further to yield consent that there should be an everlasting divorce made between it and her former lusts and lovers, and is in earnest content they should for ever be estranged from her, and she from them.* And in this consent which the soul yields for this separation, which is the great knot, it moves only as under the power, and in the vertue of the motion of the Spirit. So that Divines thus speak, *This consent is not* 5.

of our ſelves, though not without our ſelves. There is no power in the ſoul, by which as a principle and beginning of the work it's carried to the work, but acts as prevented by the impreſſion of the power and motion of the Spirit, in vertue whereof it's acted and enabled to this conſent; ſo that the act of Gods exciting and working Grace, doth not concur with the power that is in the will, to put forth this conſent, but as a principle leaves an impreſſion of power upon the will, by the vertue whereof it's moved, and ſo moves in and to this conſent. As the will of a child of *Adam*, in generation it turns from God to ſin, not by any firſt power of its own, but by the perverting work of the next Parent, who under the vertue of the Curſe and Gods Divine Juſtice, turned it from the Lord, and the Authority of the Law, and put it under the Authority of ſin: So the will of him that comes to be begotten of the Second *Adam*, doth turn from ſin unto God, not by any power or principle it hath of its own, but by the impreſſion of the operation of his Spirit by which it is turned, and in vertue of that it turns. Take an inſtance: Suppoſe the firſt Grace offered, or the voyce of Gods Call tendered unto the will that now hath the reſiſtance taken off; the Queſtion now grows, How the will comes to give her conſent to this Act or firſt Grace; this conſent muſt come either from the will only; or partly from the will, and partly from Grace; or from Grace only. To ſay from the will only, is Heretical, and perfect Pelagianiſm in the higheſt degree, which exalts Nature above Grace, nay, to make it perfect without it. If from Grace and the will both, as divers principles, then there is a concurrence of our will by a power of its own with the power of Grace at the ſame inſtant to this work of conſent, then there is an ability in the will to begin its work, and to meet and concur with Grace, without Grace ſo far in a Spiritual Act: As for inſtance, The Father and the child both draw a Boat; the Father puts more

more ſtrength to the work, the Son alſo from a principle of its own puts forth ſome ſtrength, and both theſe concur and meet in the motion; the beginning is ſeveral from each as ſeveral cauſes, though both meet in the act: So that Grace concurs with the power of the will to this motion, doth not give power and principle whereby it moves: And this alſo is Heretical and Pelagianiſm; for thus far, and in that beginning, the will cloſeth with Grace without the power of Grace, which is croſs to the Apoſtle, and to all the former concluſions. Whereas it is in this conſent, The firſt call of Grace prevents, and wholly moves the will, and the will in the vertue of that motion, moves to the call, and conſents: As it in the Eccho, the Voyce ſtirs the Air, the Air in vertue of that ſtir, returns the Voyce again.

Among ſome ſearching Diſputes, I meet with ſuch an expreſſion, which I ſhal propound and explicate, becauſe it makes way for the underſtanding of the thing in hand; *The Will doth conſent or will, but doth not make it ſelf to conſent, but is made ſo by another.* Their meaning is this:

1. The Will doth put forth the Act of Conſent, and ſo far it's the cauſe of it.

2. But it was not the cauſe of that power by which it was enabled to conſent, but that it received, and by that it was enabled to it. So that this ſeems to be the order in which God proceeds.

God takes away that reſiſtance by the irreſiſtable operation of his Spirit, when the ſoul, having that impediment removed, it comes to be in the next paſſive power, and immediately diſpoſed to a Spiritual Work, *vult moveri.* 1.

God leaves a powerful impreſſion upon the will, acts this capability to carry it from ſin in a right order to God; at the entrance of which, the ſoul is moved, and takes the impreſſion; having taken the impreſſion or motion, it moves again, and in vertue of that is ſaid to act 2.

and consent, so that this consent is not from our selves, though not without our selves.

And thus we are put beyond any principle of our own, or to be the beginners of our own work, by any thing we have in our selves, which cuts the sinews of the Covenant of Works; and hither many times God wil bring us to our beginnings, to the bare board, even to leave our souls with him, that he may carry us from sin to himself, and act us upon himself, and keep us with himself for ever. Thus *David*, Psal. 119. 29. *Take from me the way of lying*, he could not take it away himself: *Hos.* 14. 2. *Take away all iniquity*; they leave themselves in Gods hand, that the Lord would cause them to turn from iniquity.

So that in this Condition, it's true to say a man hath not a principle of concurrence with God, as by sanctified habits we have; but the Spirit puts in us a power whereby we are carried to God.

The Fourth Particular for opening of the Point.

4. *The behavior of the heart under this stroak; and that appears in the Particulars following:*

1. *When this Sorrow is rightly set on, and the soul rightly affected therewith, the sinner hath the loathsomness of corruption ever in his sight, keeps it ever within his ken*: he could not be brought before to take to heart, the hainousness of his evil; Ministers pressed him with it in publick, others minded him of it in private, forewarned him of the direful venom and poyson that lay in those distempers of his, that one day he was like to feel to the hazard of his everlasting happiness, it would be bitterness

bitterneſs in the latter end. but he turned the deaf ear to al, would not ſo much as take it into conſideration, not once look back into the danger of his rebellions, nor liſten to any thing that may force the ſame upon his ſoul ; but now the caſe is altered ; he that could not be brought to ſee ſin before, now he wil ſee nothing but ſin, cannot be brought to look off from it, he feels now the plague of thoſe provocations of his, and finds by woful proof and experience the truth of al that formerly hath been told him, and hath time enough now to recount the ſavory counſels, thoſe ſeaſonable reproofs, directions & entreaties which would have kept him from the commiſſion of thoſe evils, the hainouſneſs whereof he is not able to conceive ; the bitterneſs and poyſon whereof he is not able to bear, now he is conſtrayned to feel the ſting thereof. He hath now leiſure to ſurvey the folly and perverſneſs of his ſpirit in former times and to ſit down in ſilence and ſhame; now he can ſeal to that as an eternal truth of God which before he caſt behind his back as ſlight and vain ; Oh I now ſee the Miniſters were faithful watch-men which foreſaw the danger, and foretold me how dreadful the evils would be which did attend my diſtempers, If I would not leave my ſin, mercy and bleſſing would leave me, and my heart feels it ſo. The Chriſtians were loving and compaſſionate which laboured by earneſt and affectionate entreaties to with draw me from the wayes of wickedneſs, which with drew me from God, & by woful experience I find it ſo. Though it were a ſharp, yet it was a ſure & ſafe word that I have often heard, but would never receive, It were better *to cut off my hand & to pluck out mine eye and to enter lame and maimed into the Kingdom of Heaven*, lame and maimed in comforts and credit, and carnal and ſenſual delights, than to have al theſe *and go to hell, where the worm never dyes and the fire never goes out*, and now my Conſcience confeſſeth it is ſo, Lord where was my mind that could not

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see this? how hard and senseless my heart that could not be affected with this? the sinner thus wounded, his hand is ever upon the sore, his eye upon his distemper, as the extream danger that hangs over his head, and the deadliest enemy that is in pursuit of his soul; he sleeps & wakes & eats, and drinks with this, as his daily diet, & a standing dish; carryes it up and down as his daily companion, *Psal.* 51. 3. *My sin is ever before me*; listen to him when he sighes out his prayers in secret, ye shal observe his complaints run upon this, confer with him, enquire of his condition, his speech ever returns to this point, and al his questions lead stil to the discovery of the loathsomness of his rebellions. As it is with a commander or General of the field when he sees the enemy come on furiously, his numbers many, his power great, his souldiers skilful and couragious so that he sees all ly at stake, the shock is like to be sudden & fierce, either conquer al or loose al; A prudent commander seeing where the stress of the battle and the strength of the enemy lyes, and the safety or ruin of the whol consists; he leaves the thoughts of comforts, conveniencies, wife and family, the profits and priviledges which he hath formerly enjoyed and prized; bends al his thoughts, exerciseth the utmost of al his apprehensions now to defeat the enemy how to encounter him, how to overcome him, and this takes up the whol mind and the whol man, its vayn to attend other things when the neglect of the enemyes approach is the loss and overthrow of al. So it is with a broken hearted Christian when the numberless company of those hellish abominations of heart and life, lay siedg against and threaten his everlasting ruin, either he must destroy them or they wil undoubtedly destroy his comforts; he leaves the consideration of other things and looks to the main chance. *If my sin live I dye for it* either I must be separated from them or they from me; and therefore bends al his forces, bestows al his thoughts how the hainousness of this may be forever discovered, & the

Reader find this Sage

the heart forever freed from the power and authority thereof. The Apoſtle *Paul* hath his ſin ever in his eye, he keeps it in freſh remembrance and conſideration never hath occaſion to mention any thing of himſelf but ſtil he ſtrikes upon that ſtring, *to me the leaſt of all Saints* and then *the chiefeſt of all ſinners, I was a perſecuter and blaſphemer*, the main evil was there, and his eye and thoughts were moſt upon that. So the lamenting church *Lam* 5. 16. *wo to us becauſe we have ſinned*, the plague famine and ſword though they were beyond meaſure grievous, yet the plague-ſore of their ſins was heavieſt upon their hearts and moſt in their thoughts, ſo it is with a contrite ſinner, his complaints and thoughts return hither as to their center, publiſh the comforts, promiſes and priviledges of the Goſpel, the ſinner acknowledgeth the promiſes are precious, the comforts are ſweet the priviledges great, and happy they that ever they were born that have a title thereunto; But alas what have I to do with theſe, my heart is yet hard, and my ſins yet unſubdued. Thoſe keep good things from me; Lay open al the threatnings of the word, the plagues the Lord hath prepared, the curſes, judgments and puniſhments that are recorded in the ſcripture and ever were inflicted by the juſtice of the Lord, the contrite ſinner looks preſently beyond theſe plagues to his ſins, which is the cauſe of al theſe and worſe than al theſe, and that gives the ſting and evil unto al theſe evils what ſhal I do I have ſinned, *deliver me from blood guiltineſs O God*, not from the ſword, though that was threatned, but from his ſin.

1 *Tim.* 1. 15.

Pſal. 51

The ſinner that hath his heart thus truly affected and pierced through with his ſins, is marvelous tender, eaſily to be convinced, of a yielding diſpoſition, i.e. freely and readily enlarged in the open acknowledgment of an evil that is diſcovered & he ſtands guilty of; As it is with the body when it is pierced or pricked with a ſtiletto. He bleeds inwardly it may be but ſo as the blood hath no

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vent, nor the party relief; hence the life is in hazard, but when its thruſt quite through, though the wound be greater and wider yet the danger is leſs, becauſe the party bleeds kindly and naturally, the wound is more eaſily to be cleanſed and healed, there is no fear of feſtering and rankling inwardly, but the Chirurgeon may readily come at it for the cure. So it is when the ſoul is wounded aright with Godly ſorrow for its ſin, it bleeds kindly and naturally, ready to ſee the evil, the core, the root of that corruption from whence it comes, and willing and open hearted that the ſaving word of the truth, either of inſtruction, reproof, comfort or exhortation may be applyed for cure and recovery. A broken hearted ſinner fals immediately before the power of the word, takes the ſin preſently home to himſelf, when ever or what ever is preſented with evidence to him, without cavilling or gainſaying, ſhifting or winding away from under the authority thereof. That reſiſtance and gainſaying oppoſition is now removed, which formerly took poſſeſſion: and the irreſiſtible power of the ſpirit hath flung down thoſe ſtrong holds of Satan and ſin, hath conquered and captivated the high thoughts of the mind and ſturdy rebellions of the heart unto the obedience of the Lord Jeſus, and therefore there is an entrance and eaſy paſſage made for the truth to take place and the heart to take the impreſſion thereof with ſome pleaſing content; parts of the body which are wounded, broken and ſore, and very ſenſible of the leaſt ſtir or touch of any thing that comes nigh them, they feel preſently and are affected with ſome trouble, Oh ſay we, its my broken Arm, my ſore Hand, the leaſt touch it goes to my heart; It's ſo with broken ſpirits they are preſently ſenſible of the leaſt touch of [illegible] the leaſt intimation or diſcovery of any [illegible] by the by, if from a work that fals occa[illegible] with, yields it, and owns it, wit[illegible] Thats the deceit of my heart [illegible] ſigns my diſtemper

ſtemper unto which I have been addicted: *the law is holy and good*, but my heart naught, *and ſold under ſin Rom.* 7. this was the temper of good *Joſiah* at the reading of the law which the Lord obſerves and ſo much commends 2 *Chron.* 34. 27. becauſe thy heart was tender,& melted when thou heardeſt the words of this law, *he took the impreſſion of the truth at the firſt, without the leaſt appearance of any oppoſition*, in any particular or riſing of ſpirit againſt them, though the ſeverity and ſharpneſs of the threatnings were marvailous croſs not onely to a corrupt heart but to the outward comforts,& eminent priviledges of his place, pomp and proſperity of his Crown, and Kingdom; the heart is melted and broken is conquered by the truth, and therefore *can do nothing againſt it.* But can do any thing againſt its own luſts,and the pleaſing corruption of his own nature; this is part of that preparation which the Baptiſt, the Harbenger of our Savior made, *to make this plain*, for his coming into the hearts of his as into his temple. *Luk* 3. *The rough things ſhal be made plain, and crooked things ſtraight*, the rugged and ſturdy gainſayings of a rebellious heart, are taken away and it's made eaſy and readily yielding to the evidence of any part of Gods wil, it finds a plain paſſage into the ſoul, no rub in the way, no riſing againſt the righteous and good wil of God. If any thing be doubtful he is eaſy to be informed; amiſs, to be reproved and amended thereby. Thoſe crooked aymes and by ends alſo whereby falſhearted hypocrites ſerve their turn of the Lord Jeſus, ſeek for grace and mercy either to quiet the horror of their Conſciences, promote their own credit, or under a profeſſion againſt ſin to get more liberty to commit ſin, to ſin without ſuſpicion or diſtraction; theſe rugged diſtempers muſt be levelled,and the ſpirit of a man made plyable, ſimple and ſincere, *and then all fleſh ſhall ſee the ſalvation of the Lord.* And unleſs this de done ſet thy heart at reſt, thou canſt never ſee Gods Salvation; True indeed I

1 *Cor.* 13.

confeſs the truth many times may be ſecret and ſuch as at the preſent exceeds the reach and apprehenſion of weaker judgments. And here wil be, and in ſome caſes may, a long inquiſition and painful and tedious ſearch for the right diſcovery where the narrow way lyes. But there is great ods betwixt an inquiſition and ſerious enquiry that we may ſee the truth. And a quarrelling againſt the evidence thereof that we may not ſee it. Inquiſition is one thing, contention againſt the truth is another; that al the Saints ſhould endeavour, this none but the ungodly wil practiſe, for it's given as a never failing note of a graceleſs perſon who is appointed to deſtruction, *to them who are contentious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteouſneß.* *Rom.*2. 8. for where the one is not the other wil be; contentious perſons joyn ſides with their ſinful diſtempers againſt the truth,& authority of the righteous law of God; openly to maintain a profeſſed oppoſition againſt the truth is ſo loathſom to common ſence and croſs even to the remainders of light left in the conſcience of a natural man, that hardly any man is come to the height of wickedneſs that he dare openly own a courſe ſo helliſh, and abſurdly unreaſonable, and therefore your cunning hypocrite he colors over his treachery under another pretence; and therefore his conſpiracy comes under the name of enquiry, but in the iſſue if the wil of God ſuit not with his wil, and his righteous commands croſs the corruptions of his heart, which he is reſolved to maintayn, he caſts al away in ſcorn and contempr. So they to the prophet *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* 42. 3. they ſayed to the prophet *Jeremiah*, *let our ſupplycations be accepted before thee, and pray thou unto the Lord thy God that he may ſhew us the way wherein we may walk and the thing that we may do*; and verſ. 5. *The Lord be a true and faithful witneß between us, if we do not even according to al things for which the Lord thy God ſhall ſend thee to us*, whether it be good or evil we wil obey.

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But when he had conſulted with the Lord and returned his mind that they ſhould not go down to Egipt, which no way ſuited their privy reſolutions which they had taken up within themſelves. They oppoſe him to his very face and give him the lye, *Jer.* 43. 2. *Thou ſpeakeſt falſly the Lord thy God hath not ſent thee to ſay go not into Egipt to ſojourn there*: when he did not ſpeak that which they would have him. Thus your falſe hearted hypocrites deal with the truth of God, as the Jewes dealt with *Paul*, who banded themſelves together *and bound themſelves under a curſe, that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.* and they carryed it thus, they came to the Prieſts *Acts*, 23. 14. 15. we have bound our ſelves &c. *Now go ye with the counſel, ſignify to the chief Captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow as though you would enquire ſomthing more fully; and we, ere-ever he come neer wil be ready to kill him.* So treacherous hypocrites deal with the truth, their enquiries are indeed conſpiracies againſt the wiſdom and counſel of the Lord, they ſay they would enquire more perfectly, and ſee more and more fully what the mind of God is; But if things pleaſe not their pallat, ſuit not their conceit, anſwer not their corrupt deſire, and carnal ends they are reſolved what to do, only ask God leave to do what they liſt and therefore they make no bones to croſs the truth when it croſſeth their expectation, when that which is anſwered they cannot remove it, that which is alledged they cannot gainſay, yet hold their own apprehenſions and ſo caſt the commands of God behind their back, and refuſe utterly to follow them. Whenas a broken-hearted ſinner who hath this reſiſtance taken away, he in earneſt is content to part with his corruption, and therfore readily gives way to what ever truth is revealed in the evidence thereof. Both theſe diſpoſitions the Apoſtle expreſſeth as contrary one to another anſwerable to the contrary conditions of nature and Grace, *Rom.* 6.

17. *But God be thanked that ye were the Servants of ſin*, that is an evidence of their Natural condition, *But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of Doctrine unto which ye were delivered*; that is, they were ready and eaſie to take the impreſſion of every Truth that was publiſhed and diſpenſed to them. Certain it is, he that is not willing to be convinced, and to give way to the Authority of the Truth made known, and to ſubmit thereunto, is *led with his own luſts*, and is *a Servant of ſin* to this very day.

3. *He that hath his heart pierced through, and is truly affected with his ſins, he loaths himſelf and his ſoul for it*, ſees that ſhame is his due, and that which his ſin hath deſerved, and therefore is willing to take that which is his due and deſert, deſirous to ſhame and diſhonor that which hath been the greateſt ſhame and blot to his perſon and profeſſion, and the greateſt diſhonor to God; this is made the guiſe and behavior of all thoſe whom God doth kindly and really break off from their ſins, and bring them to himſelf, *Ezek.* 36. 31. *Then ſhall ye remember your evil waies and doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for your iniquities, and for your abominations*: Ezek. 6. 9. *And they that eſcape of you, ſhall remember me, becauſe I am broken with your whoriſh heart, which hath departed from me, and with your eyes which go a whoring, and they ſhall loath themſelves for the evils they have committed in all their abominations*: Ezek. 16. laſt, *Then ſhalt thou remember, be aſhamed and confounded, and never open thy mouth more.* The ſoul in this condition, ſees and feels now the loathſomneſs, and the greatneſs of the evil of ſin, that rebellion and oppoſition by which it hath been carried againſt God, and the ſeparation it hath made from him; and therefore it loaths that moſt, wherein moſt of this evil is harbored, and by which it hath been practiced, and that is his ſoul which hath been the ſink of theſe ſinful diſtempers, the

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root from whence all theſe bitter fruits ariſe and grows, the fountain, or dunghil rather, whence all thoſe helliſh ſteams of loathſom abominations have been ſent, in ſpeeches, practices, and behavior, in our dayly courſe; the filth of ſin is moſt loathſom, and there is moſt of that in the heart, therefore he loaths that moſt of all. It's true, there be ſome ſins ſo deteſtable to the light of Nature, and the common principles left in a corrupt Conſcience, that they are not fit to be named, Murders, Adulteries, Inceſt, and Sodomy, bruitiſh Drunkenneſs, and exceſſive Riots, which abaſe a man below the very bruit Creatures, and make the Earth ſpue out ſuch Inhabitants, as fitter for the company of Devils, than the communion of men, *It's a ſhame to ſpeak of thoſe things which were done of them in ſecret*, Eph. 5. 12. And therefore Reprobates do, and Hypocrites can, and all, even the worſt of men, may when they come to themſelves in cold blood, and take things in a right conſideration, loath theſe practices becauſe ſhameful and ſcandalous, fling filth in their faces, diſparagement upon their perſons, and caſt them out of the ſociety and communion of reaſonable men, and make them abhorred of humanity, even a terror to themſelves; but alas when this is over, they look not to the neſt of theſe noyſom abominations which lodgeth in their boſoms, where they have their being and breeding in their hearts, the Cage of theſe unclean Birds, the Den of theſe bruitiſh Luſts; but if they can wipe the mouth with the Harlot, and waſh their hands as *Pilate* did, and keep themſelves from the contempt of men, and the ſtroak of Authority; they can maintain a privy communion between theſe luſts and their ſouls, and ſuck out the ſweet of theſe by ſpeculation, and never be troubled nor affected therewith. *Judas* flings away his money, he fingers that no more, looks at his treaſonable practices as deteſtable to the very Scribes, but he ſtil keeps his murder in his heart. But when a ſinner is indeed pierced quite through the heart,

heart, and feels inwardly the loathſomneſs and evil of ſin, he loaths that moſt, and his heart moſt of all, that is moſt guilty and tainted with it. In the ſoul, there is as it were the ſoul of ſin, the ſtrength and poyſon of it, and he oppoſeth that moſt, that hath oppoſed the Lord, his Spirit, and the Word and Work of his Grace, the vanity of this mind, the perverſneſs of this will, the diſtempers of theſe corrupt and carnal affections; he is at odds with his own heart, that ever it hath held any kind of connivence and correſpondence with any corruption, ever been acted by it, carried with it, that ever it hath combined and conſpired with ſin and Satan in oppoſition againſt the righteous and holy One of Iſrael, the great God of Heaven and Earth; and here he finds work enough, even matter of abaſement al his daies, he ſits down in ſhame, and is covered with confuſion as with a cloak, and never lifts up his head more, becauſe he carries that about him, that wil dayly mind him of his own baſeneſs. It's now his dayly task to oppoſe that which oppoſed the Lord, reſiſt that which hath reſiſted the work of Grace, conſpire againſt the Treacheries and plottings of his own heart, where all the conſpiracies againſt God and his holy Law have been hatched. *Job* was vile before, but he ſaw not the vileneſs of his heart.

4. *He fears all ſin, and all provocations to ſin, becauſe he hath felt the evil of all, and knows the danger of all; any inclination from within, any temptation from without, any appearance in the leaſt meaſure that might provoke thereunto.* Therefore theſe two are put in way of oppoſition; *Bleſſed is the man that fears alwaies, but he that hardens his heart, ſhal fall into miſchief*, Prov. 28. 14. q. d. A hard heart feels nothing, knows not the evil of ſin, and therefore ruſheth like the horſe into the battel to his ruine; but if the heart be truly wounded and contrite, truly affected with ſin, as having experience of the danger of it, it wil come no more there; he

he that hath been ſcorched with thoſe flames will come no more into that fire: As men who have wounded parts, broken an Arm or a Leg, how careful are they where they ſit, where they go, they wil come neer nothing that may hurt, cannot endure any thing neer, leſt it ſhould ſo much as touch or trouble. So the Apoſtle adviſeth, *Heb.* 12. 13. *Make ſtraight ſteps to your feet, leſt that which is lame be turned out of the way*: Lame men obſerve every ſtep they take, every ſtone upon which they tread, ſee and view the place where they ſet their feet, ſearch and ſet al right, come there no more: So here, a broken Spirit fears every thought, weighs every word, takes notice of the leaſt riſing of his heart, the firſt appearance of any occaſion or temptation: Thus they fear al ſin above al other evil, nay, the leaſt ſin above the greateſt plague, becauſe he hath felt them by proof and experience to be ſuch; fears rather he ſhal not be found, than not quiet: He that fears one ſin, and yet is careleſs to fall into another, he never feared nor ſorrowed aright; ſorrow for ſin wil not make a man commit ſin by ſorrowing: if he fear, or take notice it is a ſin, it is enough: And hence it makes watchful to foreſee and prevent the evil. So *Joſeph*, Gen. 39. 10, 11. *He would not lie by her, nor be with her*, avoided her company that would withdraw his communion from the Lord. It makes a man ſpeedy to avoid the occaſion, *he fled the place*, left his garment rather than his chaſtity; he that would not fal into the pit, wil not come neer the bank: As after a Surfet, the party cannot endure the ſight, the ſcent of it, and are careful to fortifie againſt the appearance of the approach of ſuch evils, *Pſal.* 119. 11. *I have hid thy Commandements in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.*

He is willing to attend all means, but accounts moſt of thoſe that work moſt kindly and throughly for the diſcovery and removal of corruption out of the heart, and moſt prevailingly ſeparate the heart from it. Though

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the Truths which are delivered, carry dread with them to the Conscience, rack the heart of the sinner in restless horror and perplexity; are like the bittrest Pils, and the sharpest Corrosives, cross to the sinful security, and that Natural quiet the soul doth covet, yea, to his Credit and outward Comforts and conveniences in which he pleased himself, yet he is content *his hand should be cut off, and his eye plucked out*; that is, that the blessed Truth of God, and powerful and plain Dispensation thereof should pluck away those darling distempers, be they as profitable as a hand, as dear as an eye, rather than they should once pluck his heart from the Lord; quarrels with the loathsom abominations of his Nature which now are discovered, but gladly welcoms those soul-saving Truths that would slay and subdue those sins, and not quarrel with them: The Word of the Lord is a good Word, though a convicting, terrifying, yea, a condemning Word to his own apprehension; he that is sensible of his burden as unsupportable and passing strength, he is best pleased with that ease: A wise Patient, when by his tryal he hath found it, and the consent of learned Physitians and Chyrurgeons have concluded that his Gangrened part must be cut off and cauterized, cannot be healed; though his Nature shrink at it, yet Reason and his own preservation makes him desire and chuse the sharpest Instrument, because by that his life and safety is best procured. The sinner that finds the burden of his sin the heaviest of al other, and a disease most deadly to his soul, the sharpest Truths he accounts the safest, and therefore takes most content therein, there shal no course that can be prescribed, be it never so tedious to flesh and blood, no means that shall be appointed to him, be they attended with never so much danger and difficulty, but he readily addresseth himself to the use thereof, and easily submits himself to the Counsel, and Authority, and Command of God therein; willing that God should do any thing with him,

him, that he might do good to his ſoul, and remove that which he feels to be the greateſt evil of it. As Ely to Samuel 1. *Sam.* 3. 17. *Hide nothing from me*, though the heavieſt and hardeſt of the meſſage that he was to report; A broken hearted ſinner wil not capitulate with the Almighty, ſtick with God unleſs he may have his own tearms, or look for ſome abatement from the Lord, if the corruption be more than ordinary ſtrong, and the means which are to be uſed be mervailouſly croſs, not onely to a mans corruption, but to ones outward comforts, yea to nature it ſelf; yea the heart under this diſpoſition yields quietly that the Lord ſhould take his own courſe, any courſe with it, if he wil but take away his corruption with which he is plagued moſt of al, and of which he deſires moſt of al to be freed and delivered, if it were the good pleaſure of the Almighty: *Zach.* 14. 6. *Theſe are the wounds wherewith I was wounded in the houſe of my friends.* In caſe of reſolution of it, come to the higheſt ſumm and to the hazard of a mans whol eſtate even to his open beggery, if God appoints it, he wil bear it, if that be a means to remove his diſtemper, he wil not baulk it, he can part with his eſtate, if he may part with his covetous diſpoſition by that means. If the heart be looſened from the world its not hard to leave the things of the world. But if the ſtroak be but overly that hath taken off, and abated onely the edge of inordinate deſire after theſe things, but there lyes a root of bitterneſs and baſe covetouſneſs within, though a man may take the receipt in ſome degrees of it to reſtore to ſome ſhillings and crowns and pounds, but when it comes to hundreds, the heart is not looſened from al, and therefore leaves God and his ordinance rather than his own luſts. So the covetous young man when it came ſo that he muſt ſel al and give to the poor, *He went away ſorrowful*, *Math.* 19. 20. *&c.* He would rather go away from Chriſt than ſuffer him to take away his covetous diſpoſition.

Again: In Confeſſion there is alſo a ſtreſs which a proud and perverſe heart is wholly unable to undergo, unleſs the Spirit be deeply affected with unfeigned ſorrow, and ſo fitted for to apply and bear ſo keen a Corroſive to eat away his corruption; eſpecially if it be the confeſſion of ſome ſecret, and ſome ſhameful diſtemper, as in caſe al other means be improved, the Lord refuſeth to give pardon, or power, or peace, he then calls for attendance upon this Ordinance: And the contrite ſinner when he underſtands Gods mind herein, he freely, fully powrs out his acknowledgment into the boſom of ſuch, whoſe help he craves in that caſe; and as his heart is looſened from his corruption, ſo his confeſſion iſſues Naturally from him, improving of it as a means appointed by the Almighty that he may aſhame his ſinful courſe, and himſelf for it, and be for ever ſeparated from both; therefore *confeſſing* and *forſaking* are joyned together, *Prov.* 18. 13. and 1 *Joh.* 7. he that *indeed confeſſeth*; *God is faithful to forgive*, this is to *judg our ſelves*, 1 Cor. 11. Whereas the ſinner that is yet riveted in the wretched diſtempers of his own ſoul, the Lord when he hath him upon the rack of Conſcience, may happily wreſt a confeſſion from him; but it's by a conſtraining hand, and againſt the hair wholly, he would be eaſed of his plagues, not of his ſin: So God found out *Achan*, purſued *Judas*, and laid hold on both, and pulled the acknowledgment by force out of their mouths, which they did to eaſe them of their ſorrows, not as a means to help againſt their ſin. Laſtly, it eaſily fals under the evidence of an Admonition adminiſtred ſo far as it reache h the evil of his ſin, though happily unſeaſonably or diſorderly adminiſtred, neither out of that love it ſhould, nor in that prudent manner it ought to be: If yet he perceives that it helps him to remove his corruption, he is glad of it, and takes advantage thereby to get the heart more convinced, and eſtranged from its diſtemper. When *Joab* ſo rudely reproved

Joſh. 7. *Math.* 27.

proved the unſeaſonable and exceſſive ſorrow of *David* for the death of *Abſalon*, 2 *Sam.* 19. 6,7. expreſſions not beſeeming a Subject ſpeaking to a Prince, when *Shimei* caſt bitter and blaſphemous reproaches upon him, 2 *Sam.* 16. 7. 10. *Come out thou bloody man, thou man of Belial, the Lord hath returned all the blood of* Saul *upon thee*; he retired into his own boſom, takes notice of the guilt of his own ſin in the death of *Uriah* he puts up all theſe provocations becauſe he perceived Gods diſpleaſure in them, *let him alone, God hath commanded him to curſe*, and he wil do good unto me. Though the Phyſick was il mingled, and given in a worſe manner, yet he takes both, and hoping to receive help againſt his corruption by both; whereas the painted Hypocrite who never had his heart touched with any true remorſe for his many rebellions; obſerve how perverſly teſchy he wil be under a ſtinging reproof, quarrel with the man, the manner of the delivery of it, &c.

A broken-hearted ſinnner feels his coveroufneſs worſe than beggery, and therefore reſtores al readily; his ſin worſe than ſhame, and therefore freely confeſſeth it; than ſcorn or contempt, and therefore bears the ſharpeſt reproofs after the moſt unſavory and diſorderly manner diſpenſed: he is weary of his diſtemper, and therefore willing to bear the ſharpeſt means that ſhall be tried upon him by others to remove it,; uſe any, even the moſt difficult and tedious that may ſubdue thoſe diſtempers in his ſoul.

6. *He is reſtleſly importunate in ſeeking relief from God againſt his ſin, and not ſatisfied in having any thing but deliverance from ſin by Jeſus Chriſt.* He is RESTLESS and SEEKING: So that ſhould the Lord reprieve him from his preſent plagues, abate him of the terrors he hath found, and thoſe preſſures and perplexities he hath felt, ſhould the Lord eaſe him of all his horrors, releaſe him, and take preſent bale from the

troubles and occaſions of his Conſcience; his ſorrows would ſeize upon him afreſh, and his fears purſue him without intermiſſion; and the reaſon is, becauſe the ſame cauſe continues, and therefore there muſt be the ſame effect, as long as his ſin continues unſubdued, he wil continue to ſigh out his ſorrows, & his prayers; for they were not the croſſes of the world, poverty in his Eſtate, diſparagements which were caſt upon his perſon, preſſure; & perſecutions from the rage of unreaſonable men, nor yet the torments of Hell prepared or ſuffered, that did ſink the ſoul of a contrite ſinner; No, it was the croſsneſs of his corrupt heart to the holineſs of the Almighty, his oppoſition againſt him, and ſeparation from him, that was the burden unſufferable and unſupportable; and as long as this remains unſubdued, there is no end of his ſorrows, nor end of his prayers in ſuing to the Almighty for ſuccor and relief. So *David*, Pſal. 38.3. *There is no ſoundneß in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, nor is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſin, for mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me*, and he goes mourning all the day long. Remove therefore al miſeries, troubles, inconveniences, puniſhments, let the man free. As long as the bitterneſs of ſin rightly ſet on by the hand of God remains, he wil find no reſt in himſelf, and it's certain he wil give God no reſt, *Lam.* 3.49. *Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaſeth not, without any intermiſſion till the Lord look down and behold from Heaven*: For it is an everlaſting Truth; Sorrow for ſin, if right, ever drives a man from ſin to God, never from God to ſin; that which is appointed in way of Providence, to take off the reſiſtance of the corrupt heart againſt God, and our croſsneſs to him, that in reaſon cannot make way for any reſiſtance, or croſsneſs againſt him, to convince the ſoul. He that truly ſorrowes for his departure from God, as contrite ſinners do, he is driven nearer to God, but never departs away from him, by his ſorrow; And therefore

therefore he that by reason of the horror of his heart is hurried and carried to the commission of sin in his ordinary course, he never truly found the burden of sin, for common sence wil teach men that hath any consideration about him; he that is truly sensible of his burden, and in earnest willing to be freed from it wil not purposely and willingly ad to his burden. He that is content God should take away his distemper he wil not go away from God, that so he may keep his distemper; *he went away sorrowful* sayes the text, therefore his sorrow was worldly, causing death, he went away to his own ruin; *Achitophel* to the rope, *Judas* to the gallowes, *Cain* to the Land of Nod, the knife, the pit, being hideous sins, comes from a sorrow that chooseth sin before misery, not from a sorrow that burdens with sin more than misery; and therefore he never puts an end to his cryes before he sees an end of his sins, As a man oppressed and crushed under his burden and hath no power to help himself, and none by to succor him, heark how he cryes *help, help*, and never ceaseth to cry *help* till he dyes.

Again he is not satisfyed in having any thing but deliverance from sin by Christ; If nothing but a Christ can ease and deliver him, nothing but he can satisfy him, it's certain if any thing cured thee besides a Savior, something wounded thee and troubled thee besides sin, thou hast been in horror of heart, anguish and perplexity of spirit in the very flames of hell, and under the fiercenes of the fury of the Almighty, and now the terror is past and trouble is over, quieted and eased, healed and comforted; but how comest thou by quiet and comfort, how healed how recovered? did time and continuance wear it away? thy pleasures and delights remove it? did thy prayers, performances put in bale upon thy Conscience, and thou stoppest the mouth of it with this, thou hast seen, confessed, resolved? or dost thou lick thy self whol by thy reformations? thou hast not been put beyond thy shifts by the Almighty, thou hast made a shift to pray

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it out, weep it out, fast it out, when those fayl, shifted it off by thy promises and vowes and resolutions, and so never saweſt an absolute need of a Christ, nor what it was to be brought to him, but hast made a shift to scramble it out; It's certain as the Lord lives, and thy soul lives, thou never kneweſt what sorrow for sin meant, or conversion meant or Christ, or Salvation meant to this very day: It was that which *Paul* speaks of himself, 3. *Phil.* 8. 9. *That I may win Christ and be found in him &c.* his brokenness of heart and sorrow for sin did in a restless way drive him thither, he could not be satisfyed without Christ.

The Reasons of the Point.

Reas. 1. *Because this sorrow is onely true, God accounts it, and the Saints & Sinners shal so find it.* Al other sorrowes, what ever pretences or appearances are put upon them, they are in truth but counterfeit and false, and men wil fail in their hopes and fal short of their ends, and expectations that trust thereunto they are not of the right make, nor have they the right stamp of the spirit of contrition upon them, sorrow for the shame that befals the punishment that pincheth and lyes heavy, wrath and vengeance that scorcheth the Conscience, though this is good in his place as it makes way for another, yet if it go no further men fal short of this work, and in the end of their comforts also. This is in the way but he that sits down here wil never come to his end, untimely travels bring untimely births; this we must do but this is not al, and if we find no more, our sorrow is no true sorrow. Truth ever carryes conformity to the nature of the thing; the palate that tasts a thing truly it relisheth it as it is, bitter things as bitter, he sees a thing truly that sees it as it is. But he that shal tast bitter things sweet, he that shal cal black blew, we say it, and sence teacheth it, he is deceived. So here, he that finds the

the burden of the punishment and feels his plagues heavier than his sins, he doth not feel things as they are, nor passeth a righteous judgment upon them according to their nature, for it hath appeared & hath been proved that the least sin weigheth down the heaviest plague. The heart tasts evils as the stomack tasts meat, if thy sin be less than thy miseries, thy mouth is out of tast; It was that which he charged upon Job. *Job.* 36. 21. *thou hast chosen sin rather than affliction.*

Because without this sorrow the heart can never be separated from his darling corruption, the league betwixt the soul and sin cannot be broken and dissolved. Reas. 2. Happily there may arise some brabbles and slighty quarrels, betwixt the heart of a sinner and his distempers, but that there should be a real divorce without this sorrow rightly set on, it is impossible, for its open to every mans experience that which is sweet & pleasant to the soul, that wherein it finds content, it wil never cast away; love and delight are affections of union, where things appear pleasant there is no cause of parting; sorrow and hatred are affections of separation; unless the Lord therefore take off these pleasing contents and imbitter the baseness and filth of his lusts unto the soul and force him to feel them *as such* to be the bane of the soul he wil never part company; therefore it is these go together, *when wickedness is sweet, he hides it, spares it and forsakes it not*; *Job.* 20. 12. 13. things that are sweet the stomack holds them, they must be bitter and then it vomits them happily a sinner may wrangle for a turn and fal out with his distempers because they do him some unkindnesses, cross his commodity or ease &c. but they wil fal in hand pat if there be no further ground of distast and forget al those unkindnesses, *Luk.* 23. 34. the wicked wil rather loose his life than his rayling distemper; *The Dog returnes to his vomit*, because he loved not the pain of his stomach, he casts out the vomit, yet because he loved the meat, he returns to his vomit again; 2 *Pet.* 2. *last.*

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yea *Judas* is not restrained by his terror from his sin, but is acted by the power of it, while he was under the terror of it. So that there is nothing in the world that wil sever betwixt the heart and its lust. *Prov.* 27. 22. *Bray a fool in a morter yet wil not his folly depart from him.*

Reas. 3. *By this the great bar and hinderance of the coming of our Savior is removed, even the hellish resistance whereby the soul was carried against him.* For it's a peremptory Truth, *Gal.* 4. 17. *The flesh lusts against the Spirit*; and the conclusion is expres, *Joh.* 3. 6. *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh*: but every Son of *Adam* being wholly born of the flesh, doth wholly resist the Spirit. They who are wholly flesh, do wholly resist; they who do wholly resist, cannot receive; for receiving, and wholly resisting, cannot stand together: therefore this resistance of a fleshly heart must be removed, and that is done by this contrition. That Sorrow whereby the bar and hindrance which stops the coming of our Savior is removed, that sorrow is of necessity required; but by this sorrow that hindrance is removed.

Reas. 4. *In regard of our selves*; *Either the heart must thus be pierced, or else a man without this in his Natural condition, is capable and disposed to receive Faith and Christ*; either necessary thus to be disposed, or Nature without this, is fit to entertain him; but that is professedly contrary to the Truth, 2 *Cor.* 2. 14. *The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God*, Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is not subject to the Law, neither can it be*; It's not possible there should be two Suns in the Firmament, two Kings in one Throne, two Gods in one heart, to be in Heaven and Hell at once, to serve God and Mammon. So that as God must give Grace before we have it, so he must give us power to receive it, or else we are not capable of it. A Subject cannot

cannot be capable of contrary habits at the same time, *John.* 5. 45. *How can yee believe who seek honour from man?*

Hence therefore its plain, that the substance and truth of this preparative work, it must be and is enstamped upon all that belong to God, though it is in a diverse manner wrought in the most. If this sorrow be onely true and of the right stamp, If by this, sin is severed from the soul, the hinderance of our Saviors coming removed, and the soul made capable of faith and Christ, then this of necessity is required of al, and it's certainly wrought in al whom the Lord brings effectually home unto himself. *Use.*

Here is matter of complaint we may justly take up against this secure age in which we live, and it shewes, how little, very little saving sorrow there is in the world, and therefore how little saving grace; If no preparation, no Implantation, certainly, never fitted for a Christ, never made partakers of him; never hewed or squared to the building, and therfore never put as spiritual stones into the building. Had we but *Jeremiahs* fountain of tears we might mourn day and night, that there is no true mourning; and if the Lord should send an *Ezekiel* to see and mark such as mourn in secret, how few should he find; the former doctrin is a bil of inditement and fals very heavy upon five sorts of people. *Use.*

Your heedless and fearless professors, who notwithstanding lift up their head ful high, and would bear the world in hand that they desire unfeinedly to fear the Lord, nay pretend a Conscientious care to Gods Command; and conceive they have been affected with their sin and that not in a smal measure, but have had both sight of, and sorrow for their failings and they hope to good purpose, and would be loath (prejudice being laid aside) it should appear to be other. You say wel and if you prove what you say happy it is for you, which I heartily desire. But are you willing to put your case 1.

to the tryal? let us a little parly about the buiſineſs and becauſe we will deal plainly, your own practices and your own conſciences ſhal bring in evidence and thoſe I hope are beyond exception, you careleſs ſervants in the family; you careleſs hearers in the Aſſemblies, and you careleſs profeſſors in the plantations, you are here indited that the practice of this heart-breaking ſorrow for ſin is a ſtranger to you, and you a ſtranger to it in your daily courſe, we ſhal then agree upon the grounds on which we ſhal proceed.

You will not, you cannot deny, but you have wholſom and ſavory counſel daily ſuggeſted, the commands of God are line after line, precept after precept here a little and there a little, and your duties daily layd before you in publick, in private, your failings bewailed, grace and help begged from the Lord for you; the truth, your judgments do not gainſay and your hearts cannot but approve, as lawful and ſuitable to your places and according to Gods mind, yet no ſooner out of the aſſembly where you hear, out of the preſence of your maſter who commads, from your knees where you have prayed and confeſſed, but the commands are layd by, that is not attended, this not diſcharged, that is neglected, you return again to the old diſtempers; and you ſay you did not remember it, you have forgotten it, you did not think of it. What need we more evidence? thine own words ſhal be thine own witneſs, and appeal to thine own Conſcience, let that be thine own judg; didſt thou ever hear any man that ſunk under the load that was two heavy for him, wearied with the burden that is beyond his ſtrength, as not able to bear, nor to eaſe himſelf, ſay he did not remember the burden that wearied him. he did not think of the weight of the load that clogges and tires him; would you not loath ſuch expreſſions as croſs to common ſence, or would you not conclude either the man had no burden or elſe his words had no truth?

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Ah but thou saiest; If they had been gross evills it had been something, but they are petty things and therefore need no great care; what need we any more evidence, thine own words wil be thine own witness, therefore thou carest onely for great sins, fearest onely gross and scandalous evils, then thy care and fear is naught, and thy course so, and thy Conscience so, and thy condition also, he that feels al sin *as such*, he fears al sin, yea the least sin more than the greatest evil, if thou feareſt only loathsom and scandalous practices, thy fear is falſ and thy heart falſ thy sorrow was never sound nor yet thy condition; that I must confess when I consider mens infinite heedlesness, if they did know what God were, or what sin was, what Conscience, what a command, what the reckoning to come were, did not most men live without God in the world they could not live so.

The second sort who are hence shut out from having any share in this Godly sorrow, or tho through impression of the work of the spirit *is the treacherous formaliſt.* *Formaliſt* I tearm him because he carryes the face of religion, the garbe and guise of Godliness in outward appearance and would be counted a friend to the truth, so far as he may serve his own turn of it, and he is content to be at league with the Gospel, provided he may make his own terms, and attain his own ends; namely that he may have allowance in some lusts and *yet be honored also among the people*, with the title of *an honeſt Godly and good man.* But when his carnal ends are not answered, and the word requires more than he hath, and commands more than he would do, and would pluck away his beloved lust that he is loath to part withal; he then begins to set up secret conspiracies in his heart against the evidence of the doctrine, and therefore I cal him a *treacherous hypocrite*, because he may happily bite the lip and go away for the while, and sayes little but he bears a privy grudg against the strictness of such truths that are beyond his pitch and strain,

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1 *Sam.* 15. 30.

and when time comes he will be revenged of them, in the mean time his heart is inwardly tyred with them and goes off from them, this the Psalmist cals *the counsel of the wicked*, when wicked hearts cal a counsel and sit in counsel against the commands of God; and *Job* prayes earnestly that God would keep him, and free him from it. *Job* 21. 16. *Let the counsel of the wicked be far from me*, namely a reserved resolution to have his distemper, rather than to have and welcome that word that would remove it. Whereas we have heard a broken-hearted sinner is willing to attend al means, but those especially that would help him most and free him from his corruptions: this treacherous wretch notwithstanding his pretended love to the word, yet when it comes to, he is willing to be rid of the word, not rid of his corruption, so far from being weary of his sin, that he is weary of the Minister, or Christian brother that would remove it, of the word that would subdue it. This was the tempet of those formalists that *followed our savior for the loaves*, that is the Gospel for their own ends, when our savior pressed a spiritual and convicting truth upon them which might carry them beyond their own false aymes or els would condemn them utterly as such as had no life of Grace in them, unless *ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the son of man, ye have no life in you, John.* 6. 53. nor were it possible they should attain the life of Glory, they answer, *This is a hard saying, who can bear it?* it pinched them to the quick, and searched the very core of their corruption, and they were resolved to bear their sin, but could not bear the saying of our Savior; the presence of their sins was pleasant, they could welcom them, but the power of the Truth was hard, they could not indure that; nay, they speak as though it were a matter impossible, who hath power to submit to it? truly none but a heart truly pierced with Godly sorrow: and therefore it's added, verse 66. *From that time, many of his.*

Psal. 1. 1.

John. 6. 16.

his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him, becauſe they would walk in their own waies, and wicked practices, therefore they choſe rather to forſake the company and Miniſtry of a Savior, than to forſake their own diſtempers. Thus it hath been often ſeen in the Country whence we came, many a formal wretch hath been at great coſt and charges, laid out himſelf and eſtate to bring a faithful preacher to a place; and when the ſoul-ſaving diſpenſation of the Word hath either diſcovered his falſneſs, and laid open the curſed haunts of a carnal heart, ſhook his hopes, and beat all the holds he had of the goodneſs of his eſtate, and batterred them before his eyes: He that had the greateſt hand to bring the means and Miniſtry unto the place, if he cannot cunningly undermine the man, he would rather leave the place, than live under the Miniſtry that would take away his luſts: This was the wound of the yong man, becauſe he wanted this brokenneſs of heart, not being rightly burdened with his corruption, nor looſened from it, *Matth.* 19. he went away from that Counſel of our Savior that would have plucked away his Earthly, covetous humor which did take place in him, *He went away ſorrowful:* al the while our Saviors conditions ſuited his crooked ends, and carnal reaſon, he gave way and welcom to what he was adviſed, *All theſe have I done from my youth up,* this is ſo as I would have it; but when our Savior went further, *Go ſell all,* that was beyond his pace and expectation; and he went away, he could not bear the Counſel, and therefore would not hear it. Thus it befals many a man that the Lord hath brought hither, confined him to the narrow compaſs of the Covenant of the Goſpel: All the while he lived at large as it were, and either conſtantly or occaſionally attended upon the preaching of the Word, and carried an approved kind of conformity thereunto, in the Judgment and Opinion of ſuch as only attended the general ſtrain of his profeſſion, and ſo walked aloof off in way of

of Christian courtesie and loving entertainment of the Truth, al went well: but when he comes to be foulded in the fellowship of the Faith, and that men follow him home to his doors, and watch him in his retired carriage, and have occasion to grapple with his spirit in the specials which concern his particular course, as when he had failed and offended, and therefore follows him with Physick answerable and appointed for the purpose, a seasonable admonition: poor sinful Creature, he is not able to bear the Discipline and Government of Christ, to buckle under it, he begins secretly to distast and undermine the strictness of those waies that formerly he did come into these Parts for, that he might seek them, find and enjoy them as he often professed. It's said of *Herodias*, when *John* Baptist would give no Dispensation to her lust, but professed openly against it, so that she must be forced to reform it, or to have Gall and Wormwood with it, either not have it, or not have any peace; the Text saies, *Mark*, 6. 19. she waylaid him, and left not the plotting of her purposes until she procured his ruin, she watched him a turn, and was revenged of him. So it is with a carnal heart, he is so far from being troubled for sin, that he is troubled he cannot commit it; so far from being plagued with the corruption (as *Solomon* speaks, he that sees the plague of his own heart, the plague of pride, the plague of a perverse, sluggish, heedless heart) that he is plagued and tormented with those Spiritual Truths, and power of those Ordinances, that wil not suffer those lusts to lodg in his bosom, nor suffer him to lie and live in them with any quiet or content. Thus when sin should be grievous as the Psalmist speaks, *the waies and Commands of God are ever grievous to such*, it's a grief to him to be counselled, checked, crossed in a sinful course; was ever any man truly sensible of a burden that would not be eased? any man oppressed with a load, that would not be content to have it removed, and taken away from him?

1 *Kings* 8. 38.

Psal. 10. 5.

him? Of this temper were those the Lord *delivered up to a reprobate sence*, Rom. 1. *who did not delight to have God in their knowledg*, they bear a secret spleen against such saving Truths as would search the core of those noysom corruptions of their hearts. It's certain such never knew what Godly sorrow for sin meant: since we have heard that such are willing to attend all means, but take most content in those that work most powerfully for the removal of their special distempers.

3. *A third sort who fall short of this saving Work, is, your self-conceited Pharisee, who hath such an overweening apprehension of his own worth and excellency, that he is not able to take shame for his sin, & therfore cannot endure to be convinced of it*, what he wil not do, he wil not know, loth to confess his course shameful and vile, because then he concludes there is no color of common sence to continue in it, but he must be forced to reform it, unless he would openly proclaim to al the world, that he is resolved to go against Knowledg and Conscience, which is too loathsom and gross, even to ordinary prophaneness; therefore he pretends nothing but the search of the Truth, and further information of the mind of the Lord, and if that once could appear, how glad would he be to receive it, and more glad to follow it, because this plea is beyond exception, yea, carries an appearance of consciencious and judicious watchfulness in a mans course, which cannot admit a Cavil, but is secretly resolved of the Conclusion, the reasons shal never be plain to him that would press and perswade to the practice of that which doth not please his sensual heart, which he purposeth to satisfie; let men say what they can, if he may have approbation and allowance from others to follow his own heart, it wil be more credit for him, and he shal find more ease; if not, he determines to do what he list without leave and allowance, holds out this in his ordinary and dayly profession; it's the way of Truth he desires

desires to find, the Rule he would see, the mind of God he endeavors to know and follow; that he pretends, but intends indeed to walk in his own way, and follow his own mind; and therefore if things answer not his intents, suit not his expectation, but Arguments seem strong that perswade to the contrary, and the evidences of Reason look and lead another way: he then keeps afoot his old course, confesseth he is yet in the dark, those reasons do not carry him, those arguments do not convince him, he desires further light, and shal be willing to submit and follow, *i. e.* if men would be willing to submit to his conceit, and follow his humor; thus he holds his sin, and holds his enquiry, keeps off al conviction that he may keep his corruption, and his course in it. As we know it in the Country from whence we came, some wily-headed persons get possession of a living, keep the Owner in suit and restless wrangling many yeers together, against the evidence of their own Conscience and Reason, because so long they can keep the Living, and reap the Commodity of it. So while men keep an enquiry, and dispute what they should do, all that while they do what they list, but only waiting for better light, *Numb.* 23. 34. when *Balaam* had gone against the expres Counsel and Command of God, to listen to *Balack* to gratifie his malicious desires, the Angel of the Lord met him, and withstood him in the perverseness of his way, he crooked his way, and perverted his path against Gods expres charge, observe how pliably he comes in to the Angels reproof, *I knew it not that thou stoodest in the way, now therefore if it displease thee, I will get me back*: he knew it displeased God, and though he said so, yet he kept his disposition and resolution to curse Israel, and so to displease God still, and therefore he contrives all waies to compass his intent, and therefore *here he builds seven Altars, and there he builds seven Altars*, that he might ask leave of the Almighty, and when that would not do it, he went without

out leave, *Numb.* 24. 1. This is one part of that of the Prophet *to lay hold of deceit*; and so of sin, whereas a broken-hearted sinner as we have heard, because the holds of sin are cast down, and the crosnes and resistance of the heart removed, and his soul loosened from his sin, he is easily willing to be convinced, sensible of the least inkling and intimation of any evil that is or shal be discovered, and sits down under the Evidence of it; but when Reasons are so pregnant that he cannot gainsay, and Answers so undeniable that they cannot be shaken, yet to stand off from the Truth, with a pretence of waiting for a further discovery, argues a person strengthened in the stiffness of his Spirit, which holds out Truth at the staves end, and was never yet subdued to the Soveraignty and Authority thereof; he keeps the blow off, and therefore breaks not under it, shuts the Truth out of their Souls, and therefore it stirs not, works not at all upon the soul; such are afar off from God.

4. *The fourth sort is your complaining Hypocrite*, whose Conscience hath been awakened with horrors and fears, and the heart startled with the terrors of the Almighty, and affected with the sight and sence of his sins, and the venom and dread of those Curses that the Truth hath revealed, and fastened upon the soul; he sees he is now in Gods hand, and that he hath him at an infinite advantage; to bear it, is beyond his power; to avoid it, is beyond his Skil; to resist is bootless, and against Reason and Sence, that were to hasten his own ruin; his heart is filled with grief, and his eyes with tears, and his mouth with heavy complaints to God, to man, and he is free and full this way, and that usually, and this he hopes may move the Lord to pity, and to spare him, and abate him of those plagues which he hath denounced in his holy Word, and he cannot but confess he hath deserved by reason of his sin; and he presumes this will go for good pay with the Lord, considering those many human infirmities that do attend us since the Fall, and that

it is beyond our power to help our ſelves, and free our ſelves from our corruptions; thus he keeps his complaints, and keeps his ſins, he mourns over his diſtempers, and maintains them while he doth ſo; thus they bath their ſins, as he ſaid, but do not drown them with thoſe heart-breaking Sorrows, which in truth are poyſon to them: thus it was with *Ahab* when he had received that dreadful Meſſage from the mouth of the Lord, *That he would require the Blood of* Naboth *at his hand, and cut off his houſe, he rent his cloaths, and put on Sackcloth, and faſted, &c.* 1 Kings, 21. 27. the Lord himſelf obſerves how he acts this work of Contrition, and that in a comly manner, Stage-Player like, and abates him for the preſent execution of the plague; the Lord loves his own Work and Ordinances; that as it is with a Parent that affects a Child, the very Picture of it pleaſeth him; ſo it is with God, he likes his Ordinances, and the acting and uſing of them: but this did not cure, but encreaſe his corruption, for he that was *an Enemy to* Elijah, verſe 20, he profeſſed after, 1 *Kings*, 22. 8. *He hated* Micaiah, his ſorrow was too overly and ſlighty, he rent his cloaths when he ſhould have rent his heart. Thus it was with thoſe Hypocrites, *Iſai.* 58. 2. 3. *We have faſted, ſay they, and thou regardeſt not*; we have humbled our ſouls, and thou reſpecteſt it not; the Lord Anſwers, *You faſt for ſtrife and debate*, and to ſeek your own pleaſure; they made way for the maintaining and practiſing their ſins, not for the removal of them from their hearts; and it's admirably ſtrange how this deluſion wil cozen a man, and how far it wil carry him, it wil make him Sermon-Proof, and help him him to fence his heart againſt the moſt ſharp and ſearching Words. As he, how came he to deſire and delight in the moſt powerful preaching, and yet never knew what it was to need a Chriſt, or to be relieved by him? *Anſw.* I conceive ſuch threatnings are intended againſt them that wil not repent and ſorrow for their

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sins, but that will I. Nay, it hath been found by experience from the confessions of many, that they would weep over their sins, and then fal to commit them; men make their lamentation over their distempers, and then return to the Commission of them: As old friends weep at their parting, not because they would be quit one of another, but it's a grievance they should part, and they hope to meet again shortly.

The fifth sort, is the discouraged Hypocrite, whom the Lord hath exercised under his heavy displeasure, and the poyson of his corruptions hath been Gall and Wormwood to his Conscience, the floods of iniquities have followed at the heels, and forced him to find his heart, and prayers, and endeavors, and yet al in vain, he finds no relief at all, no ease, no good at all, by any means the Lord hath appointed, and he improved according to his ability; the sinner sinks down in desperate discouragement, and casts off the thoughts of mercy, and the continuance of any further endeavor, he sees no profit accrewing, and concludes there is no possibility of obtaining, his hands grow feeble, and his heart faint, he concludes, as good sit still, as rise and fall; I shal never attain it, thus, and so long I have tried, and therefore why should I endeavor it? So wretched *Saul*, 1 Sam. 28. 15. *God hath forsaken me and answers me, neither by Urim, nor by Ephod*: thus also that wicked King, 2 *Kings*, 6. last, *This comes of the Lord, why should I pray to him, or wait upon him any longer?* and thus it was with them, *Ezek.* 33. 10. *When pine away in their sins*, lie under the weight, and never look out for help: This is not Contrition or brokenness of heart, that makes a man restlesly importunate in seeking the Lord; its not therefore sorrow for sin, but a kind of sullen waywardness of Spirit, a dogged kind of self-willy disposition, because the pressures grow heavy and unsufferable, and the Lord withdraws himself from our desires, and it's beyond our power and ability to relieve our selves, 5.

God denies to hear, and will not help, and we cannot help our ſelves, nor command help elſ-where; in ſullen waywardneſs the heart caſts off any further attendance upon the Lord.

Whereas Godly Sorrow rightly ſet on, and that for ſin, and departure from God, wil not ſuffer the ſoul to depart further; that which takes away the reſiſtance of our corrupt hearts, that wil not ſuffer them yet further to depart, theſe deſperate diſcouragements are Valleys and Ditches that muſt be filled up before the Lord Chriſt come into the ſoul, *Luke*, 3. 5.

Uſe 2. Prov. 5. 22. TERROR. *It ſhews the direful condition of all hard-hearted ſinners*, who are not only in the Chains of darkneſs, *and held with the Cords of their own iniquities* (as the Scripture ſpeaks) but ſhut up in the Dungeon of everlaſting deſtruction, and locked in within the Iron Gate of a hard and ſtupid heart without the leaſt preparation, or expectation of good from the Almighty.

This Hardneſs is double; there are two ſorts, at leaſt two degrees of it.

1. *Such as ſleep in a careleſs and ſecure Courſe, never yet ſaw, at leaſt were not ſenſible of the plague of Sin, or the ſting and puniſhment that is attending thereupon.*

2. *Such as have been in the fire, ſcorched with the fury of the Almighty, which hath drunk up their ſpirits, but when God hath abated them of the expreſſion of his Diſpleaſure, and allayed the flame, they grow cold and careleſs; as the Iron that hath been heated with a long and ſtrong Fire, grows more hard when it grows once cold, than ever it was before: They have been gaſhed, and torn in pieces with the terrors of Conſcience; but having worn out their Terrors, and Fears, they are more ſeared and ſenceleſs than ever.*

Such

Such who are drowned in senceleſs ſecurity, have their hearts glutted and ſurfeted with pleaſures, and luſts of the fleſh and contents of this preſent world. To ſit moping in a corner, ſink under the burden of their ſins and ſmoak out their dayes in a melancholick preſſure and penſiveneſs of ſpirit, they account it a matter of ſcorn, a ſilly kind of ſottiſh behaviour unbeſeeming perſons of a generous ſpirit; they wonder what men ayl, and conclude its more in mens conceit, than that there is any juſt cauſe for ſuch a carriage; for they bleſs God they never knew what it meant, and they hope they never ſhal; And hence they fearleſly adventure upon the practice and commiſſion of known evils; and it never ſtuck in their ſtomach, nor are they troubled with it, but are delighted in it; that which is a plague to the broken hearted Saints, they are plagued with their pride & froward perverſneſs of ſpirit, but its a paſtime, a may-game, it's their mirth and matter of merriment in their meeting; my Maſter rebuked me ſharply ſaies the Servant, my Mother chid me ſayes the child, but I think I fitted them, they would have their way and wil, and would have it done after their manner, And I did it with a witneſs, ſo il-favoredly, that I know it vexed al the veyns of their hearts, thats the way to weary them, and there they ſolace themſelves, ah it's roaſt meat to them; and thus it is *a paſtime to a fool to do wickedly*: but know thou art a hard-hearted fool, a graceleſs wretch in the wiſe mans account; do not our plantations groan under ſuch ſons of Belial? ſuch senceleſs ſtocks do they not ſwarm in our ſtreets? are not our families peſtered with ſuch? Eſau-like when he ſold his birthright; eat and drank, and roſe up and went his way, not affected with what he had loſt, not aſhamed of what he had done, but ſenceleſs of al; or like the man in the Goſpel poſſeſſed with the Devil, ſometime *he caſt him into the fire and ſometime into the water*, ſo they run headily into ſin, and impudently continue in

1.

Prov. 10. 23.

Math. 17. 15.

in such wretched courses; they commit sin, and continue in sin, hasten Gods wrath, and their own ruin, and go away senceless of al so that it's now seasonable to take *Jeremiahs* complaint *I hearkened and heard and no man sayd what have I done? Jer.* 8. 6. He might and did hear of hideous vile evils without any diligent hearkning, see and meet loathsom distempers without any searching; but when he followed men home wondring, in what quiet do these men live? what comfort do these men find? how do they bear up their hearts under such hellish carriages? I wil go see how they lye down in their beds, and whether they dare sleep or no under such trangression and such guilt, and when he came *he hearkned*, surely I shal now hear them mourn bitterly, afflict their hearts with unfained grief, there is no such thing, *no man said what have I done?* not a word of that, it was the leaft part of their care, the furtheft off their thoughts. And this is the temper, the condition and disposition of scores, hundreds of you that hear this word at this instant. Is not the day yet to dawn, the hour yet to come: hat ever you shed a tear, sent up a sigh to heaven, in the sence of thy evils, or set thy self in secret to bewail thy distempers before the Lord? God knows and your hearts know, the Chambers where you lodge, & the Beds, where you lie, can bring in witness against you, you are strangers to this blessed brokenness of heart, yea enemies to it; you were pricked, no not so much as in your eyes nor in your tongues, God and his word and al means that have been tried could never wrest a tear from thine eye, nor a confession out of thy mouth, thou wilt commit thy follies and die in the defence or excuse of them: but to have thy heart affected in serious manner with the filth of thy sinful distempers, it is to thee a riddle to this day. Nay there be thousands in the bottomless pit of hell that never had the like means as thou, never committed the like sins, and yet never had such a senceless sottish heart under such

such rebellions, as thy self. *Wo be to you that laugh now, you shal mourn*: those flinty spirits of yours wil not break now, they shal certainly burn, you draw a light harrow now, you find no burden of your pride and stubbornness, rebellions, idleness, and noysom lusts, they are no burdens, ye can go boult upright with them and Sampson like carry the very gates of hell upon your backs and never buckle under them, wel the time wil com you wil *cal to the mountains to fal upon you, and the hills to cover you*, from the infinite weight of Gods everlasting displeasure. Taste a little the sting of this sin, and see the compass of this accursed condition of thine and go no further than the point in hand. Luke, 6. 25

Thou art far without the walk of the Almighty, there is no dealing and entercourse between thee and the holy one of Israel, the Almighty passeth by and wil not so much as change a word with thee or cast a look upon thee to leave any remembrance of himself upon thy soul; thou livest as though thou hadst nothing to do with him nor he with thee, nothing to do with grace or heaven; the holy spirit awes some, humbles others, some it quickens that were sluggish, establisheth others who were weak, onely thou art senceless of any operation of the Lord, thou hast a heart that puts away the presence of the Lord out of thy mind if it were possible; *thy fleece is dry when there is dew upon al the earth* this is that which the Apostle discovers to be the cause of that heavy curse of the heathen, *Eph.* 4. 18. *strangers from the life of God by reason of the hardness of their hearts*. Oh thou hast a strange heart, and leadest a strang life, even as opposite to God as darkness to light, hell to heaven, differs onely but in degree from that distemper which appears most eminently amongst the Devills and damned, even to be an adversary to God and his grace, to stand it out in defiance with the divine goodness of God, his power and faithfulness, *Pharaoh* he said it, but thou dost it, stoutst it out with the Almighty. 1.

ty, and impudently dareſt the great God, *who is Jehovah? I know not Jehovah*, neither will I let my heart go to yield ſubjection and ſervice to him; I know no authority of a command that ſhal rule me, nor admonition that ſhal awe or reforme me. Thus thou art a ſtranger to the wiſdom of God, the folly of thine own ſelf-deceiving mind and heart, leads thee and deludes thee, thou art a ſtranger to the grace and holineſs of the Lord; the perverſneſs and rebellion of thine own wretched heart takes place onely with thee, yea a ſtranger to mercy, and to the compaſſions and conſolations of the Lord Jeſus, and his bleſſed ſpirit, who chooſeſt thine own ruin, loveſt thine own death, following lying vanities and forſakeſt the mercies purchaſed and tendred to thee.

2. *Upon theſe tearms in which thou now ſtandeſt God hath appoynted no good for thee while thou continueſt in this temper*: as he ſaid, *write this man childleſs*, to write upon it, write thy ſoul graceleſs, that ſhal never proſper, *Iſa.* 61. 1. 2. *The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath annointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, liberty to the captives, opening of the priſon to thoſe that are bound, to appoint to them that mourn in Zion; beauty for aſhes, the garment of gladneſs for the ſpirit of heavineſs*: thou heareſt the glad tidings of mercy, pardon and peace, grace of life, that paſſeth underſtanding, joy unſpeakable, rich and plentiful redemption from al ſins and miſeryes, which God hath layd up in his everlaſting decree, and laid out in the great work of redemption by the Lord Jeſus, but thou mayeſt let thy heart at reſt, as long as thou ſeeſt that hard heart of thine thou ſhalt never ſee good day; joy, and comfort, and liberty, they are not thy allowance they are childrens bread, its prepared, intended, and appointed of purpoſe for others, thou haſt no ſhare and portion in al theſe precious things of life; hands off thou hard hearted wretch; There is good newes from heaven, *the*

poor

poor shall be enriched, the mourners comforted, but no good to thee; no, look the second verse, there is other provision the Lord makes for stiffnecked Creatures, he proclaims *a yeer of Jubile, a day of acceptance from God to the distressed*; but there is *a day of Vengeance of our God*, to those that are of a contrary disposition; there is Vengeance, and it's from God, he wil be revenged upon thee for all the contempt of his Truth, grief done to his Spirit, resistance of his Grace, he will rain fire and brimstone, storm and tempest upon thee, this shall be the portion of thy cup, for the conclusion is peremptory, *Job*, 9. 4. *Who ever hardened his heart against the Lord, and prospered?* Can there any example be alledged that wil evidence it? any reason given or conceived that might prove it possible? Search the Stories of so many Generations, and enquire since the day that God created *Adam* upon Earth, if there were ever such a thing heard. When there were Gyants upon earth, *the whol earth was filled with violence*; al the world set themselvs in open rebellion against God; God opens the windows of Heaven, and the fountains of the great deep, and sends in a Deluge of his displeasure and wrath, and destroies those hard-hearted Rebels from off the face of the Earth; me thinks I hear those flinty stiffnecked wretches, screeching and crying, drowning and dying, and roaring out their wretchedness, those loose Libertines, *eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, and knew nothing*, *i. e.* and would know nothing; their Cups in their hands, and Queans in their Arms, and despair in their mouths: Oh we shut our Ears, and hardened our hearts against the striving of Gods Spirit, the call of Gods Messengers, the warning and entreaties of Gods patience: We would not receive Counsel and terms of Peace and Mercy, and therefore we now perish without Mercy, curling one another, and breathing out their last; Curled be the day that ever I knew thee, by thy carnal deceits I was strengthened; Curled be thou and thy company, by thy example I was

Mat. 24. 38.

deluded and hardened: Thus they are accurſed, and go curſing down to the depth of the Sea, and ſo to the depth of the bottomleſs Pit.

3. It is beyond the *Scope of our Saviors coming into the world, and the Commiſſion he hath received for the great Work of Redemption, to communicate Grace and Life to thee in the condition in which now thou art*; Luke, 19. 10, *The Son of man is come to ſeek and ſave that which is loſt*; not ſuch as was miſerable, for ſo all was, but ſuch as were ſenſible of that undone condition in which they lay. Yea, his expreſſion is peremptory, *I came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, Matth. 9. 13. Thoſe who conceited themſelves whol, in a ſafe and ſecure eſtate, he had no Commiſſion to call or comfort ſuch; they muſt be broken before he bind them, weary and laden before he eaſe them, wounded before he will pour in the Oyl of Mercy to heal and relieve them: Hence it was that when our Savior had prepared his Feaſt, killed his Fatlings, and drawn forth his refined Wines, and ſent and invited his gueſts, all pleaded their excuſes, and refuſed to come, not being hunger-bit, and ſenſibly affected with their own miſerable eſtate, and the need they had of ſupply from thoſe rich Proviſions of a Savior, their careleſs and ſecure hearts could reliſh other ſenſual care, and ſwiniſh contentments which they had at home; when men ſet no price, ſee no need of thoſe Dainties and Rarities of the riches of Grace and Salvation, purchaſed by Chriſt, and offered in the Goſpel, he peremptorily concludes, *Such ſhall never taſt of them*, Luke, 14. 24.

2. *The ſecond ſort of hard-hearted ſinners, or of a further and higer degree in this hardneſs, are ſuch as have been exerciſed under the diſpleaſure of the Almighty, have had many ſtabs by the Truth, and threatnings of the Word, and have had many bruiſes and blows from the Diſpenſations of God in his Ordinances, deeply affected, and almoſt overwhelmed with the danger of their*

own

own Estates, and the dreadfulness of those everlasting burnings which now they felt in their souls, and were not able to bear; but at last they have SHOOK OFF THEIR TERROR, *worn away the vexation, and trouble that lay upon their spirits*; and now they grow more fierce and hard-hearted than ever before, and dare out-face and out-brave the severest threatnings, the most dreadful Judgments that can be denounced, and which they find & confess themselves liable unto; *having their conscience seared with a hot Iron*, 1 Tim. 4. 2 & themselves becoming fearlessly impudent to adventure upon sin, without the least touch of any remorse or trouble for it. The time was they confess they sate with trembling hearts under the Dispensation of the Word, and so silly and feeble spirited they were, that their hearts failed with fear, and fainted away in the apprehension of the hainousness of their sin, and the unsufferable plagues that were due thereunto. But now that dale is mown, those daies are past, they have got more wit and skil than to be scared with such Bug-bears, they can tell how to fence themselves against such fears and disquiets, they can sit and hear, and attend all that can be said, let them speak while they will, and wear their tongues to the stumps, they can hear all, and slight all; nay, rather than fail, deride and make a mock of what they have heard, but to be troubled at what they hear, they are not such Babies, they are not so much as stirred with any thing: Oh wo to thee that ever thou saweſt thy heart at this pass, the greater will thy trouble be one day: *The Devils beleeve and tremble*, and doest not thou stir? Art thou in Hell here on Earth before thou comest thither? and dost thou come short of the Devils themselves in sensibleness of heart, and canst thou content thy self, yea bless thy self in this condition? Hear what God hath determined against thee, and wil certainly bring upon thee, *Deut.* 29. 19. *He that shal hear the words of this Curse, and shall bless himself in his heart,* *James*, 2. 19.

ſaying, I ſhal have peace though I walk in the Imagination of my heart, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt, the wrath of the Lord will *ſmoak againſt that man,* to cut him off from the Land of the Living, &c.

But before I part with thee, ſuffer me to ſpread the dreadfulneſs of thy condition before thy face, and leave it upon Record in thy Conſcience, that thou mayeſt ſay thou waſt forewarned. Know therefore thy caſe is almoſt deſperate, and beyond Cure, thy doom draws on and haſtens, which thou canſt not eſcape, thy plagues are beyond the utmoſt of all extremity, which thou canſt not conceive, much leſs endure.

1. First, *Thy Caſe to common Reaſon* (leaving ſecret things to God) *ſeems paſt cure; it's a great ſuſpicion the day of Grace is over, the date of mercy paſt, the period of Gods Patience come to an end*; all means have been uſed, and concluſions tryed with thee, the invincible ſtiffneſs of thy Spirit hath won the day, thou haſt tried Maſteries with all means, Law and Goſpel, Promiſes, Threatnings and all, the unconquerable hardneſs of thy heart hath out-bid all Diſpenſations, thou art Cannon proof, Law proof, Goſpel proof, Threatning proof; there is no other means of good in Heaven or Earth, and thou art worſe by them; all which are provided to better others, and have ſo done: without means thou haſt no reaſon to think that God wil work, and thou haſt had the try al of al, and thou art beyond theſe in thy ſtifneſs, and therefore beyond all helps in an ordinary way, *Prov.* 29. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardens his heart, ſhall be deſtroyed, and that without remedy*: he that caſts away the ſalve that ſhould cure him, ſpils the Phyſick that ſhould recover him, caſts away the meat that ſhould nouriſh him, how ſhould he be either cured or ſupported? There are no Commands that awe, no Promiſes perſwade, no Terrors awaken, then there is no Remedy: He muſt be deluded that oppoſeth the Wiſdom that only can guide him, he muſt be curſed

curſed that reſiſts the mercy that only can ſave him, he muſt be damned that tramples upon the blood of Jeſus, that only would redeem him, there is no other Remedy, no other Name but the Name of Jeſus whereby men muſt be ſaved, *Acts*, 4. 12. Nay, not only means fail him, but God himſelf ſeems to forſake, *Gen.* 6. 3. *My Spirit ſhall not alwaies ſtrive with man*: He hath ſtriven by his Terrors, by his Mercies, ſtriven and laid hold upon thee by heart-breaking intreaties; *Turn ye, why will ye die? turn ye, and cauſe others to return, and ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin*, Ezek. 33. 11. *Oh that there were ſuch a heart in them to fear me alwaies, that it might be well with them*, Deut. 5. 29. but thou haſt wound away from Gods hand, and forſaken him, and he hath forſaken thee; there is Word and Promiſes, but no God in them, Terrors and Entreaties, but no God in them; *Thou art without God, and art thou not then without hope?* When the throws of a travelling Woman leave her, her life leaves her. So here. *Eph.* 2. 12.

It's ſaid of a company of Deſpiſers of Chriſt, *That they crucifie him again unto themſelves*, Heb. 6. 6. When they reſiſt one Chriſt, and reſiſt that Salvation that hath been offered, either they muſt have another Chriſt, or he anew crucified if ever they be ſaved. So there muſt be a new Chriſt, and new Scriptures, before ſuch miſerable wretches can be relieved, the Blood of Jeſus, the Spirit and Promiſes of Jeſus; Grace and Salvation hath been tendered to there ſtubborn-hearted, and they have oppoſed and caſt all away; either there muſt be another Chriſt, or he muſt die again: All the Commands and Comforts in the Word, all the Rules and Directions, Threatnings and Counſels, have been uſed and tryed without any profit and prevailing power, therefore there muſt be another Covenant, Chriſt, and Scriptures, if thou beeſt ſaved; that's incredible, therefore the other impoſſible; *How can ye eſcape that neglect ſo great Salvation?* Heb. 2. 2. I appeal to your ſelves, You will go from the Law to the Goſpel, from Juſtice

juſtice to mercy, but whither wil you go when you have departed away from mercy, and mercy is departed away from you.

2. *Thy judgment haſtens, thou canſt not not eſcape it nor prevent it,* and truly it's coming more *ſpeedily and ſuddenly* then thou art awar of. *Thou bringeſt upon thy ſelf ſwift deſtruction,* & though thou ſleepeſt *yet thy damnation ſleeps not.* Hebr. 6. 8. *the earth that often receives rain from heaven, and yet brings forth thorns is near unto curſing,* look every day that God ſhould curſe al thy comforts, thy out-goings, and thy in-comings, *Prov.* 28. 14. *He that hardens his heart fals into miſchief,* fals into it, and is overwhelmed with it al of a ſudden; he may fal into any temptation, he oppoſeth that counſel that ſhould preſerve him, falls into ſins, he caſts away that grace, and reſiſts that ſpirit that ſhould ſtrengthen him; nay *being paſt feeling,* ſuch a one wil run to commit al *wickedneſs with greedineſs,* Eph. 4. 19. Hell and Divills and luſts are let looſe upon ſuch, the light of nature, evidence of reaſon, dictates of of Conſcence, authority of the law, terrors of judgments, intreaties of mercies, the hard heart hath caſt away al theſe, and therefore ruſheth into what evil comes next, againſt Conſcience, command, reaſon, ſence, nature; men put of the principles, not of humanity, but of ſence, and become more baſe than the beaſts themſelves, do that which beaſts wil not do, and morality is aſhamed to ſpeak; As the ſhip when the anchors are broke, and cable cut and a mighty tempeſt ariſes, ſhe is wholly left to the rage of wind and weather. When men *harden their hearts God ſweares they ſhal never enter into his reſt.* Hebr. 3. laſt.

Uſe, 3. *Ground of* COMFORT *to ſupport the ſincking ſpirits of broken hearted ſinners when they ſeem to faint under the fierce diſpleaſure of the Almighty, and to be overwhelmed with the unſupportable weight of the wickedneſs of their own ſouls which they are neither able to avoid, nor able to undergo.* Here

Here hence is matter of ſound refreſhing both to the *parties that are the patients*, and bear the bitterneſs and burden of their ſorrow; *to their friends*, who as ſpectators do mourn with them, and are affected with a fellow feeling of the evil of that which they find experimentally; let me ſpeak a word ſeverally to them both.

Know therefore to thy comfort thou diſtreſſed ſoul, this ſorrow and anguiſh which now oppreſſeth thee, its not unto death, nay its the onely way and means to deliver from death, from the death of ſin, and that ſecurity in which thou lyeſt, without either ſence of thy miſery, or the leaſt appearance and poſſibility of deliverance, from the death everlaſting of thy ſoul unto which thou waſt haſtening amain: As it is with a dead body when with rubbing chafing, and pouring in of hot waters there is ſome kind of warmth coming and overſpreading the parts, there is good hope the ſoul is again returning, the man reviving again; Its ſo in this ſpiritual quickening of a ſoul dead in ſin, ſtone dead, ſtiff & inſenſible of the diſtempers that lodge within him, & take poſſeſſion of the whol frame of the inward man, as ſtif coldneſs takes poſſeſſion of a dead body; when the Lord begins to affect the ſinner and makes throughly ſenſible with Godly ſorrow, by rubbing and chafing in of ſharp reproofs and paſſionate exhortations, there is a kind of ſpiritual warmth coming into the ſoul, and certain evidence like a harbenger or immediate forerunner of life, and comfort which wil undoubtedly take up their abode in the ſoul, he that goes in the vally of tears he goes on comfortably becauſe he goes in the right way to Zion, *they ſhal go weeping and mourning with their faces toward Zion,* Jer. 50. 4. this is the guiſe and the way of ſuch who are travailing towards the holy land, *Immanuels* Land, the land of Promiſe, they may be content to bear the hardneſs of the way when they are ſure to attain the end of their journey, the ſalvation of their ſouls, that wil pay the charges and recompence the labor 1.

bor and quit coſt in the iſſue; it's the travellers concluſion that carries them through the harſheſt way they meet withal *he hath never an il day that hath a good night*, and when he finds the marks of the way that are given him, the directions that are ſuggeſted to diſcover his approach to his own home, that makes him overlook all the reſt, as happily they may be to this purpoſe, after you are paſſed ſo many dayes journey you ſhal come at laſt to a moſt tedious and heavy way, and deep waters ſuch as you muſt be forced to ſwim, can feel and find no bottom, yet if you keep the right cauſey there is no danger at al; It's a ſad way, but ſafe, and then know you may, you are nearer home, the danger is paſt, and the worſt is over, ye are within ſight of your own houſe; when the traveller who hath taken theſe directions, and retaynes his marks in his mind, when he finds that by experience which hath formerly been ſpoken, the way marvailous heavy, redious, he ſticks faſt in the mire and clay, anon the waters are ſo deep that he feels no bottom, he remembers and concludes now I know where I am, I am ſure I am in the right way and certainly near home; this makes him devour al the difficulties wet and weary, he feels he fears nothing, he thinks of nothing, but his wife wil welcome him, his children rejoyce in him, his friends refreſh and accompany him, there he ſhal take up his lodging and refreſh his weary nature; ſo here, in thy ſpiritual travel when the weight of thy ſins which of al other is the heavieſt, the loſs of a God, and his favor and preſence which are depths and floods of diſtreſs which come even to the ſoul, there thou findeſt no bottom they are unſufferable unſupportable, then lift up thy head, know this is the right way to Chriſt, and thou near home, even within the ken of the Promiſe of eternal life; Thou wilt come immediately *to Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant*, thy head and husband, who wil wipe away al tears from thine eyes, who wil embrace and welcome thee in the armes of his mercy

Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.

put

thee into the boſom and bowels of his love, & rejoyce over thee with everlaſting joy, come thou mourning weary and weatherbeaten ſinner, I have wept for thee and died for thee, and prayed for thee, and looked many a long look for that diſtreſſed ſoul, Oh be humbled, be eſtranged and divorced from thy luſts, when wil it once be, Oh welcome, though come weary and tired, no ſooner there arrived but the ſpirit of comfort ſhal poure *peace into thy Conſcience which paſſeth al underſtanding, & joy unſpeakable and glorious, al the firſt born of God* they wil come about thee and be glad to enjoy thy fellowſhip, *and the innumerable company of Angels wil ſing Hallelujahs in heaven, peace on earth and good wil towards men*; God and Chriſt, Heaven and Earth, Men and Angels rejoyce in thee and thy condition, and why mayeſt not thou be refreſhed in it? There is no other way whereby God can according to covenant convey ſpiritual good to thee, no other way whereby thou canſt receive it. Be therefore forever comforted in thy condition, God muſt cut if he cure thee of a ſtony heart, God muſt wound that ſecure and careleſs ſoul of thine if ever he heale it, ſo himſelf profeſſeth it is the method he takes in relieving the miſery and diſtreſſed and ſinful condition of a ſon of *Adam*, *Iſa.* 19. 22. *The Lord ſhal ſmite* Egipt *and ſhal heal it, and they ſhal return to the Lord, and he wil be entrated of them, and he wil heal them.*

Oh but my terrors have been many formerly but never as now paſſing ſtrengih; my burdens were heavy before, but never ſuch as now beyond al extremity, above al the ability I have, beyond al poſſibility I can conceive, to endure and not to dy under them in everlaſting diſcouragement never to look for any good. *Object.*

Therefore thy comfort never ſo near as now; As in child-birth, ſo in this new birth, the ſtronger and ſharper the throwes, the more ſpeedy and ſucceſſful the deliverance. As it is in the cure of an old feſtered ſore, *Anſw.*

al the while it breaks and runs there is ſome eaſe, but there is yet no cure while the core remains, when that is preſſed out though it be with much pain and extremity, yet then the healing comes on with moſt ſpeed. When thy ſorrowes have ſeized upon thee and thou haſt breathed out thy ſighs and complaints to God, there hath happly been ſome eaſe, Oh but there was a core of ſome boſom luſt or corruption that lay within, and yet not looſened and diſlodged, and there is no perfect cure or healing wil befal ſo long as that remaines, and there muſt be much preſſing, much ſtruggling by word and paryer, before that wil part, and when thy heart parts from that, know undoubtedly, health and Salvation and comfort is near.

Object. *Comfort? Alas what do ye ſpeak to me of comfort? who am unfit and unworthy, nor have any right unto it, Light is ſowen for the righteous and joy for them that are upright in heart,* yea but they have it hardly for whom it was prepared even planted and ſown of purpoſe, it's their harveſt let them reap it and receive it. But what have I to do with it, to put my ſickle into anothers corn, who am a ſinful unrighteous wretched creature?

Pſal. 97. 11.

Anſw. Not onely the righteous who by the power of grace can ſubdue ſin, *but even the mourners in Sion who by the ſpirit are burthened with their ſins, theſe I ſay have allowance and that from God to ſhare in this comfort.* Bleſſed are they that mourn they ſhal be comforted *Math.* 5. 3. thou Sayeſt thou art not, thou findeſt none for the preſent; be it ſo, that is not in the promiſe but it's ſure enough thou ſhalt be, that is ſufficient: God wil make thee ſtay for it, and beg for it, and prize it before it come, that thou mayeſt be thankful for it when it comes; it ſhal be in Gods time and in due time, and if thou wouldſt have it before, know thou art not fit to receive, nor God willing to beſtow, thou haſt it not in *hand*, but its certain in *hope*; it wil be and wil not fail, and

and the reverſion of it, is ſufficient to ſupport thee to live in hope; nay it is a portion provided on purpoſe and came for this very end; *Iſa.* 61. 3. *to appoint unto them that mourn in* Sion *beauty for aſhes the Oyl of gladneß for the ſpirit of heavineß*, yea God himſelf wil come for this end to bring conſolation uto thy ſoul.

Thats a likely matter indeed when the vileneß of my corrption makes me loathſom to my ſelf, and weary of mine own ſoul, how juſtly may God loath me and eſtrange himſelf who is ſo great and holy a God. *Object.*

That which thou conceiveſt a cauſe why God ſhould withdraw his preſence, it's that why he delights in thee; thy ſins are loathſom thats true, but to loath thy ſin, and thy ſelf for them, its that which makes way and room for the Lords both Love to thee and preſence with thee, *Iſa.* 57. 17. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity I dwel with him alſo that is of an humble & contrite ſpirit, to revive the heart of contrite ones.* *Anſw.*

The greatneſs of God and holineſs of God takes moſt content in a broken heart burdened with ſin and looſened from it. And herein the doubts of a diſtreſſed ſoul may be anſwered, and diſcouragments alſo cured and removed, wil ſo great a God vouchſafe to cal upon ſo baſe a creature, ſo holy a God, ſo ſinful, ſo filthy and polluted a ſinner? yea behold, God reveals himſelf in the height of al his greatneſs and holineſs and profeſſeth he hath but two habitations where he takes content, *i. e.* the higheſt heavens and a broken heart, that ſees his own weakneſs and therefore the greatneſs and power of God is moſt diſcerned, it ackonwledeth its own vileneſs and abhorrs its own filthyneſs, and there the holineſs of a God is moſt honored, feared and advanced, therefore the fitteſt for God to dwel in where his honor may moſt of al be advanced; and he comes with his coſt, and for this intent and purpoſe, *that he may revive and quicken*, therefore he wil not, therefore he

cannot miſs of his end, and the attaining of that he intends nor thou of thy comfort.

2. *It's matter of comfort to ſuch as are frinds and wel-wiſhers to thoſe burdened and diſtreſſed creatures*; Mourn for them you ſhould, but yet be comforted with them you ought. For if you deſire their good in truth and in earneſt, its certain they are now, and never were before in the road of mercy, in ready way, yea the onely way to attain favour and everlaſting compaſſi-

Luck. 19. 44. ons from the hand of the Lord, It's now *the day of Gods viſitation*, the Lord ſeemed to paſs by as a ſtranger before, as though he cared neither for them, nor the welfare and comfort of their ſouls, but ſuffred them to live and dye in their ſins not ſo much as looking after them: *behould now is the day of their viſitation*, wherein the Lord comes to viſite the ſinner, and to enquire touching the eternal proſperity of the ſoul, to looſen him from the power of his luſts, and to free him from the prevailing power of thoſe corruptions, that would certainly ruinate his happineſs, Yea now the ſpirit ſeems to travel upon the ſoul until the Lord Jeſus be formed in him, when as formerly he bore the image of ſin and Satan, ſo the Father of the Prodigal when his heart had been pinched under the preſſures and miſeries of his baſeneſs brought upon him, and conſtrained him to

Luck. 15. 24. take thoughts of forſaking his former courſe, ſee what ſolace it was to his Father. *For this my ſon was dead but is alive again*, he was ſecure, he is now affected with the ſight and ſence of his ſin, he was hard-hearted and perverſe in his way, now he is plyable and yeilding to any impreſſion. I ſpeak it the rather becauſe carnal perſons conceive that this broken heartedneſs is a kind of curſe, and that which makes men unſuitable to their Places, and unſerviceable wholly for any imployment; the prophane Husband, the unjuſt Maſter, the looſe Companion, curſe the day that ever the Miniſter came amongſt them; the wife was vain and froathy to ſuit

his

his folly; but now the former mirth is turned into mourning, she grows mopish and melancholly, there is no content in her: The Apprentice that was as the Glove to the Hand, fitted his turn at all times, at alasses, would lye for his humor, cozen for his profit, but now forsooth is grown so tender and conscientious, he dare do nothing, there is no service in him; his companion that would ruffle it out in mirth & jollity, is becom so pensive under the pressure of his Conscience, that there is no society in him; they look at them as lost and undone persons, the Preacher hath spoiled them, they are fit for nothing. And so also some poor ignorant people whose waies were civil and moral, and never acquainted with Gods manner of dealing in such cases; when they see their friends, and children, and kindred, sinking under the sence of their sin, and Gods displeasure, their hearts taken up wholly with attendance to their own Spiritual necessities, and taken off from all other occasions; they look at it as a kind of madness and distraction, and they fear they will not come to themselves again, when in Truth they never came to themselves before now, nor in truth considered where they were, or what they did: whereas this broken-heartedness doth not impair any mans abilities, but turns them the right way, and improves them for the Lords advantage; it makes men unhandy to sin, but fit for the Service of the Almighty; only it is a spiritual sickness, and you must in reason wait til the extreamity be over, before the party can be free for any work but this, because he finds this most needful: He that takes Physick retires into his Chamber, but it is not to hinder his imployment, but further it for future time; the Child when he sees the Grapes a pressing, he fals a crying, and fondly conceives his Father spoils them, to bring Wine out of them: The unexperienced stander by imagines that the pieces of Gold that are put into the refining pot, and that into the fire, will utterly be spoiled, until he sees a Vessel of Gold framed out

out of them, glorious for shew and Service, he then changeth his mind. So here; when thou seest the Lord putting men into the furnace of his fierce wrath, scorching their Consciences, know, the Lord hath them now in the fire, and intends to make them Vessels of Grace and Mercy, who before were Vessels of Dishonor, fit for nothing but to serve sin and Satan, help thou forward the work, and rejoyce in it; and as *Paul* in a like case wish'd, *That not only they, but all*; thy friends, and children, and kindred, were not almost, but altogether such as they are, broken-hearted sinners.

Acts. 26. 29.

Use. DIRECTION. *How to carry our selves towards distressed sinners in this condition, who are thus pierced unto the heart, whose perplexities of spirit are such they cannot express, and their pressures beyond strength, more than they are able to undergo.* We should yern towards them in mercy, and put on the bowels of tenderness and compassions towards them, in lending what possible relief may be to the utmost of our abilities; not only Religion will enjoyn this, and reason perswade, but even Nature and Humanity might compel and constrain us hereunto. It was that which the Law enjoyned, *Deut.* 22. 4. *Thou shalt not see thy Brothers Ox or his Ass fall down by the way, and hide thy self from him; but thou shalt surely,* Surely *help him,* q. d. Let all alone, use no pleas, make no excuses, this must and ought to be done; *Doth God take care of Oxen?* No, it is for our sakes it was spoken; Shal the Ox be burdened, & not the heart under pressures be relieved? Shal the Ass fallen be raised again, and the Conscience bowed and crushed under the weight of everlasting vengeance, not be comforted? There Life natural is only endangered, here Eternal Salvation is hazarded; therefore their greater need calls for the greater pity. As *Job* complained, *Job*, 19. 21. *Have pity upon me, O my friends, have pity upon me, for the hand of God hath touched me. The spirit of a man will*

Prove. Pr. 18. 14.

bear

bear his infirmity, but a wounded spirit, who can bear? Lend a hand therefore at such a dead lift, and help him to bear that, that no creature of himself is able to undergo; have such in your minds dayly, carry them in your prayers, keep them dayly in your hearts; when a party is in a fainting fit, dying away, how readily doth Humanity lead men to lend present help; one man holds, another rubs and chafes, a third applies warm cloaths, each man strives to come first, and to do most; I pray you take of my Water, take of my Bottle, &c. that's but a sudden qualm over the heart that wil suddenly pass away; but this is a wound that hath pierced through the soul, bleeding and sinking with Hellish horrors, breathing out his sighs, Oh when, Oh when wil it once be? He that hath not put off Humanity, and the very Nature of a man, he cannot but put on tenderness and commiseration towards such; and therefore what shal we think of those, who instead of tenderness and pity, which they should express towards such, their hearts rise in bitterness, and indignation against them; yonder be your broken-hearted persons, &c. It's no great matter, you may see what they have got by Sermon gadding, what may we think of such? We may say, and think as *Job* speaks, he that is in misery, should be comforted by his Brethren, *but men have forsaken the fear of the Lord*, Job, 6. 14. It's an Evidence of an Egyptian when an Israelite is going out of *Egypt*, he stinks in his Nostrils; nay, a sad argument of a soul devoted to destruction, *Deut.* 25. 17, 18, 19.

EXHORTATION. *As to proceed the right way, so never to rest until we come to the right pitch of this saving sorrow*, otherwise we shall lose our labor, all the pains, and toil, and trouble we take, wil prove indeed unprofitable, we shal lose our labor, and our souls and all; we should not content our selves therefore with a slighty touch to have the skin happily a little rippled, or the heart stabbed now and then with an overly stroak, but *Use 5.*

but ſtay not until we come to the bottom; to be pierced through and through again, until we ſee our luſts bleeding out their heart blood, and the core of our corruptions coming out; true it may be, it wil coſt hot water, time and toyl, before that day come: be it ſo, but it wil quit coſt when ever it comes; the longer the ſeed time, the larger the Harveſt; *They that ſow in Tears, ſhall reap in joy, let us not loſe all for a little*: The Patient wil tel you, why ſhould I be cut for the ſtone in the Reins, if the ſtone never be taken away, and I cured? Hath then the puniſhments which have been threatened, the ſtroaks and terrors of Conſcience which thou haſt felt, the dreadful diſpleaſure of the Almighty, which hath been denounced and ſeized upon thy ſoul, have they happily wreſted tears out of thine eyes, bitter confeſſions out of thy mouth, and forced thee to penſiveneſs in thy carriage, and perplexity in thy Spirit? &c. All this is good ſo far; but it wil do thee no good, if thou goeſt no further. Say with thy ſelf, what ſorrow have I more than *Judas* had? what do I do more than *Cain* did? what difference betwixt my complaints, and *Eſau*'s tears? Do I out of horror of heart, vomit out my ſins by confeſſion? So did *Judas*. Do I make Reſtitution? So did *Judas*. Do I wander up and down racked in a reſtleſs condition? So did *Cain* like a Vagabond upon the face of the Earth. Do I ſue to God for a bleſſing? So did *Eſau*, and that with tears, and that with importunity. Take not up thy ſtand here, but ſay, Oh Lord, that I may have ſomthing more than Hypocrites, do ſomthing more than Reprobates can do; have I ſuffered all theſe terrors, wept al theſe tears in vain? If ſo be it be in vain; Oh let me not have ſorrow only, but that true ſorrow that may *cauſe repentance never to be repented of*: Go then beyond al horrors and tears, and ſtay not before thou findeſt and feeleſt thy ſin worſe than al thy plagues, or elſe thou never felteſt them aright; Look not to puniſhments that are croſs to

Pſal. 126. 5.

Math. 27. 3. 4. *Gen.* 4. *Heb.* 12. 17.

2 *Cor.* 10. 7.

thy

thy comfort and ease, but look to the stubbornness and resistance of thy heart, which is cross to God and his Holiness, and holy Laws; let that be heaviest of all other evils, which indeed is the greatest evil of all. This too much hast in the new birth makes many abortive Christians, still born, not *begotten again to a lively hope*, 1 Pet. 1. 3. They heal themselves before God heal them, make application before sound preparation; not that they can apply too soon, if they apply truly; but they think they do apply when they neither do nor can. Keep thy heart in soak by godly Sorrow, until thou findest thy corruptions like noysom weeds come up kindly by the roots; until thou so feelest sin as sin in the bitterness thereof, that thou feareſt al sin in the least appearance thereof: that whatever shal be conceived, or be discovered to be such, the first inkling, notice, inclination, disposition, or suspicion thereof, thy heart may tremble to come neer any provocation leading that way, and may readily listen to what ever may lend help or direction to avoid it or subdue it. Bear thy burden till the Lord ease thee, be in prison, and let the Iron enter into thy soul, until the Lord send and deliver thee, and bring thee out of the house of Bondage; then shal thy mouth be filled with laughter, and thy heart with joy, and that *joy shall no man take away from thee*; travel the appointed months of mourning, and then thou shalt be delivered with success, and attain the consolation that wil stand by thee.

How may we get help against the stubbornness of our hearts, against that resistance and crosness that we find in our selves to this contrition of heart?

The Directions are Three.

Do not tug with this resistance in thine own power, or any ability that is in thee; do not in thine own strength contest with that rebellion, for it's certain this *Direct.* 1.

wil make it exceſſive rebellious; when thou ſeemeſt to offer violence to thy ſelf, thou wilt be more croſs, nay thou wilt grow to a kind of felneſs and fierceneſs of oppoſition againſt the Work of Gods Grace; *Sin becomes out of meaſure ſinful by the Commandement*, Rom. 7. 13. and inſtead of quarrelling with thy ſins, thou wilt quarrel with the Almighty; and if I do what I can, why ſhould not God help me? Mark, now you are quarrelling with God; and becauſe you cannot do what you ſhould, you wil do nothing: this is ordinary and uſual, you wil find a Helliſh fierceneſs of Spirit upon this turn.

Queſt. You wil ſay, *What ſhall I do?*

Anſw. *Come and bring thy ſoul into Gods Preſence, lay thy ſelf down in his ſight, and tell the Lord that thou art a Traitor, and which is worſe, thou canſt not but be ſo*, that's thy miſery; make known al the baſe abominations of thy heart and life before the Lord, and al that croſsneſs and oppoſition that thou findeſt in thy ſoul to Chriſt and his Grace, beſeech him to take away the treachery and falſneſs of thy heart, beſeech him that he would do that for thee that thou canſt not do for thy ſelf; tel him that thou would'ſt chuſe not to be, rather than to be thus treacherous; tel him that he hath ſaid, *he will take away the heart of ſtone*, Ezek. 36. 26. and that it is not in thy power to put it away, and therefore leave thy ſoul there, beſeeching him to make known himſelf as a God hearing prayers, pardoning ſins, and ſubduing iniquities; plead the Covenant of Grace, and the Promiſes of it, that al is freely, and firſtly, and wholly from himſelf, that he muſt *make us his People*, he muſt make us humble and broken-hearted; *Look to Jeſus Chriſt*, and beſeech him that *hath the Keyes of Hell and Death*, that he would unlock thoſe brazen gates and doors of thy heart, *Rev.* 1. 18.

2. *Do not fear the terror of the Truth, ſo as to ſtep aſide from under it, and withdraw thy ſelf from the ſtroak of it,*

it, but think of the goodneſs of it; as a man, though he fear the bitterneſs of the Pill, yet knowing it's a means of his health, he is willing to take it: So here. When God moves, move thou; when he ſtirs, ſtir thou; many a man neglects the ſtirrings of the Spirit of God, and never hath the like again, and then on his death bed cries for his old terrors. Oh therefore when the Truth meets you and ſtirs you, keep the heart under it, and follow the blow in ſecret, and bleſs God that hath opened thine eye, and affected thine heart in any meaſure, and let thy heart lie ſtil under the ſtroak of the Truth: the want of this is the reaſon why many a ſoul is ſo long under the workings of Contrition, and never grows to any ſettlement, becauſe they keep not their hearts under the power of the Truth, which would throughly break the heart for ſin, 2 *Kings*, 13. 19. *The Prophet bids the King ſmite, and he ſmote thrice and ceaſed, whereupon the man of God was wroth, ſaying, thou ſhould'ſt have ſmitten five or ſix times; then had'ſt thou ſmitten the Syrians till thou had'ſt conſumed them.* So when God hath been grapling with thy heart, and would have plucked thee out of the paw of the Lyon; thou haſt prayed once, or twice, or thrice, it may be; and then after a while, thy care, and diligence, and endeavors are over; thou ſhould'ſt have prayed ſix times, thou ſhould'ſt give God no reſt, nor thy own ſoul any reſt, thou ſhould'ſt never ceaſe ſtriking until thou haſt deſtroyed thoſe corruptions of thine.

Poſſeſs thy ſoul with the tickliſhneſs and danger of that condition thou art in. In regard of the ſecrecy and difficulty of the work, how eaſily may I be deceived, and how dangerous is it if I be; a failing here can never be repaired afterward; if never broken for ſin, then never broken from ſin, then never united to Chriſt, and then thou ſhalt never ſee the face of God in Glory: think how many have miſcarried in this place: as when a Marriner ſees the Maſt of a Ship, he fathoms the Wa- 3.

ter, and tacks about, and looks about him, leſt ſaies he, we ſplit upon the rocks alſo. So do thou look to thy ſelf here, thouſands have ſunk and ſplit themſelves here, and thou art in danger; and know, that if thou doeſt miſcarry here, thou art undone for ever.

They ſaid to Peter, *and the reſt of the Apoſtles, men and brethren, what ſhall we do?*

Here we have the carriage of theſe Converts, as a fruit of that piercing and brokenneſs of Spirit, which was wrought in them by the power of the Word; the inward diſpoſition of the heart diſcovers it ſelf by the outward expreſſion of their ſpeeches and behaviours here laid forth before us, as that ſpecial effect which followed preſently, and undeniably therefrom. The breaking of the clouds by thunder and lightning, brings a ſtorm with it uſually; *the ſtorm in their ſpeeches*, argued thunder and lightning *in their ſpirits*: look how the temper and conſtitution of the body goes, ſo the pulſe beats in his proportions anſwerable; the Spirits few, and heart faint, and actions feeble, it moves marvelous weakly; if the pulſe be marvelous quick and ſpeedy, the Phyſitian will tell you there is a Feaver ſtirring, and it may be hazardful, that hath now ſeized upon the Nature of the party: Look as our hearts and conſciences are affected within, ſo will be the pulſe of our words and actions without: their piercing was *deep*, and their complaints are *bitter*, which here they make. In it obſerve Two things.

1. *The parties to whom they tender their complaint*, Peter *and the Apoſtles.*

2. *The complaint it ſelf.*

The

The parties are described and set forth two wayes, 1. In regard of the office unto which they were now called. *Peter* and *the Apostles*. 2. In regard of that esteem and respect they bore them, they lovingly and tenderly here greet them, *men and bretheren*, a stile and compellation that holds forth endeared affection with it, so far are these men altered from what they were, from what they said, from what they did, ere while they scorned them, now honored them, not long since they reproached them, *are not these men ful of new wine*? and now behold they reverence and fear before them, they rejected their counsel before and are now forced to crave it, yea right glad to hear and receive it. In a word, they repair to them as messengers of Christ, they tender them as bretheren, the world you see is wel amended.

Look at the complaint as it looks to the parties and there wee have two points we shal speak briefly to them both.

They whose hearts are pierced by the Ministry of the word, they are carryed with love and respect to the Ministers of it. Doct.

Men and Brethren, they be words of honor & love, & they spoke them seriously and affectionately, they mocked them before, and they now embrace them, they cared not what tearms of reproach they cast upon their persons, they know not now what titles of love and tenderness to put upon them, they now fal at their feet as clients, who flouted them before as enemies, so it was with the jaylour *Acts*, 16. 30 31. 34. how kindly doth he use *Paul* and *Silas* whom erewhile he handled so currishly, beyond the bounds of reason and humanity, he entertains them in the best room of his house who before thought the worst place in the prison too good

good for them. He baths their wounded parts which he had whipped and stocked before, fears and trembles before them as his counsellors, whom he handled most harshly before as Prisoners; he feasts them as his guests whom he had struck as Malefactors; the wind was in another dore, the man is of another mind yea is another man than he was. God had no sooner opened the heart of *Lydia* to attend the word but her affections were exceedingly enlarged, towards the dispensers thereof. *Acts* 16. 15. so that the cords of her loving invitation led *Paul* and held him captive, he professed *she compelled them i. e.* by her loving and affectionate expressions, prevailed with them for a stay. And while *Paul* had the *Galathians* under the Pangs of the new birth and Christ was now *forming in them*, they professed they *would have plucked out their eyes* and have given them to the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. 15.

Naaman hath no sooner his leprosy healed, and his heart humbled and cut off from his corruption, but he professed himself and what he had is at the devotion of the Prophet, and that not out of complement but in truth, 2 *Kings* 5. 15. *Take a blessing from thy servant.*

Reasons are two.

Reas. 1. *They see and know more than formerly they did,* when happily the crooked counsels of others deceived them, and their own carnal reason couzened and deluded their own souls that they mis-judged the men and their doctrine also As that they did not speak the truth, or else had some crooked and self-seeking ends in what they spak; As either to gratify other mens humors whom they would please or else to set up their own persons and praise and esteem in the apprehensions of others as singular men and more than of an ordinary frame; and therefore would wind men up to such a high pitch of holiness, and force them to such a singular care to fly the very appearance of al evil, when is more than needs and

and more than God requires, and more than any man can do but now they find by proof and are forced out of their own sence and feeling to acknowledg the truth of what they have spoken, and what they have heard, & themselves also, to be the faithful embassadors of the Lord Jesus, and therefore worthy to be believed and attended in their dispensations and honored of al. *So Paul* 2 *Cor.* 4.3 *We hope we are made manifest unto your consciences* Thus the Woman of *Samaria* when our Savior came home to the quick and met with the secrets of her heart, she then fel from her taunting and slighting of our Savior to admiring of him, *Come saith she behould the man that told me al that ever I did, is not he the Christ.* John, 4. 29. Look as *Nabuchadnezzar* said, *Dan.* 4. last, now I know the God of *Daniel* is the true God, *and now I praise the living God*, so when they have been in the fire, and God hath had them upon the anvil, now I know what sin is, now I know what the danger is, now I know what necessity there is to part with sin; when the Patient hath found the relation and direction of the Physitian hath proved real it makes him prize and honor his skil and counsel, for ever; and for ever to have his custom, As the Pythonist was compelled from the power of *Pauls* administration to confess, *these are the Servants of the living God which shew unto us the way of Salvation*, so here. *Acts*, 16 17.

As they see more and can therefore judge better of the worth of persons and things; *so their conscience now hath more scope, and the light of reason hath more liberty, and allowance to express that they know, and nothing now can withstand and hinder*; for while men are held captive under the power of their lusts and corruptions of their hearts, in which they live, and which for the while they are resolved to follow; though their reason happily do yeild it, and their own hearts and Consciences cannot but inwardly confess it, the persons are holy, the sins are vile which they condemn *Rom.* 2.

demn, and dangers dreadful which they forewarn; yet to profeſs ſo much openly to others, and to the world were to judg themſelves while they would acquit others, and condemn their own courſes, while they ſhould praiſe and honor the carriages and perſons of others, and therefore darken the evidence of the word by carnal cavils and reproaches, ſtifle the wittneſs of Conſcience and ſtop its mouth that it cannot ſpeak out. Thus *Rom.* 1. 18. *they hold down the truth in unrighteouſneſs.* When the truth that is by their judgments aſſented unto, and by their hearts yeilded, and therefore ſhould break out and give in teſtimony to the good wayes of God: their corrupt and unrighteous and rebellious hearts hold it priſoner, wil not ſuffer it either to appear unto others or prevail with themſelves; As it fared with the Scribes & Phariſees when the wonder was wrought by *Peter*, ſay they *Acts*, 4. 16. *that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifeſt to all that dwel in Jeruſalem, and we cannot deny it* (*q. d.* they would have done it if they could) *but that it ſpread no further, let us charge them ſtraitly that they ſpeak no more in this name.* But here when the conſcience of a poor ſinner is convinced, and the heart wounded, and that reſiſtance and gainſaying diſtemper is taken off and cruſhed, now Conſcience is in commiſſion and hath his ſcope & the coaſt is now clear that reaſon may be heard, now the broken hearted ſinner wil ſpeak plainly, theſe are the guides that God hath ſet up, their direction I wil attend, theſe are the dear and faithful ſervants of the Lord whom I muſt honor, and with them I would be truſt my ſ ul, not with the blind guides, and falſe teachers, who daub with untempered morter and are not truſtie to God, nor their own ſouls, and therefore cannot be to me. Oh ſend for ſuch though in their life time they could not endure the ſight, abide the preſence, nor allow them a good word, reviled their perſons and proceedings and profeſſions, (yea that they wil confeſs) but

but it was directly against their own judgment and knowledg and Conscience, myne own heart often gave my tongue the lye, when I did so speak and so disparage their conversation, otherwise I must have condemned mine own course and Conscience also, but the Lord is with them, and the truth is with them, and a Blessing wil undoubtedly follow them. Ask why these poor pierced sinners did not go to the Scribes, they would tel the truth. Oh it was they that deceived us, led and drew us to the commission of this hellish wickedness; we cannot cal them teachers but murtherers, they could never help themselves, therefore not help us. 557

INSTRUCTION, *Sound contrition and brokenneß of heart brings a strange & a sudden alteration into the world, varies the price and valew of things and persons beyond imagination, turnes the market upside down*; makes the things appear as they be, & the persons to be honored and respected as they are in truth, that look what the truth determines, reason approves, and Conscience witnesseth, that account is current in the hearts and apprehensions of those, whose hearts have been pierced with godly sorrow for their sins. Because such judg not by outward appearance as it is the guise of men of corrupt minds, but upon experience, that which they have found and felt in their own hearts, what they have seen and judged in their own spirits, they cannot but see so and judg so of others. Those who were mocked as *men ful of new wine*, are now the precious servants of the Lord, flouted to their faces not long since, now they attend them, honor and reverence them, yea fal at their very feet. It was before men and drunkards, now men and bretheren, the world you see is wel amended but strangely altered. It was said of *John* Baptist the fore-runner of our Savior, and the scope of whose doctrine was mainly to prepare the way for the Lord, it's said of him that *Elias* is come and hath reformed al, set a new face and frame in the profession of the *Use.*

Gospel, *Math.* 17. 11. *Turned the disobedient to the wisdom of the just men, the hearts of children to the fathers,* that though they were so degenerate that *Abraham* would not own them had he been alive, yet when the Ministery of *John* had hammered and melted them for the work of our Savior, they became to be wholly altered, their judgments altered and their carriage also. For in truth the reason why men see not the loathsomness of other mens sins, or else have not courage to pass a righteous sentence upon them, It is because they were never convinced to see the Plague sore of their own corruptions, never had their hearts affected with the evil of them in their own experience but their own Conscience was misled out of authority, and stifled that it durst not outwardly condemn that which inwardly they could not but approve. They therefore who either do not see their own evil, or dare not proceed in open judgment to condemn, they wil either not see or not pass a righteous judgment upon others, so *Paul* intimates to *Agrippa, Acts,* 26. 8. 9. *let it not seem strange Oh King for I my self did think I should do many things against the name of Jesus, which I also did. q. d.* whiles thou so continuest thou wilt see as I did, and do as I did, but after God had entered into combate with him and spoken dreadfully to his soul see, he is another man, and of another mind; he destroyed the Churches, *now takes care of them*; he that hated the name and Gospel of Jesus *counts all things dung and dross for the excellent knowledg of Jesus,* the world is wel amended but its mervailously altered, and therfore *we have found this man a Pestilent fellow Acts,* 17. 16. he hath subdued the state of the world.

Phil. 3. 8.

Use, 2. TERROR, *this shewes the dreadful and miserable condition of al those who after al the light that hath been let into their minds, conviction into their Consciences, power into their hearts to ching the evils that [illegible]*

unto them, they loath the light that hath layd open their evils, distast those persons and preachers and Christians most, that have dealt most plainly to descover the loathsomness of their distempers, it shewes the irrecoverable corruption of the mind and heart that grows worst under the best means, and cleaves most to its sins under al the choycest means that would pluck their sins from their heart, and their heart from them, they are either fools or mad men that cannot endure the presence of the Physician without whose help they could not be cured. This is made an evidence of the estraingment of Gods heart from a people, and an immediate fore-runner of their ruin *Isa.* 9 13. 14. 17. *For this people turneth not unto him that smote them, neither do they seek the Lord, therefore the Lord wil cut off from Israel head & tail, branch & rush, one day therfore the Lord shal have no pity on their young men nor mercy on their fatherless, for every one is an Hypocrite.* It takes away al pity in God, al hopes in themselves of any good. After *Pharoah* had many qualms & recoylings of spirit by *Moses* dealing with him, & the miracles which he had wrought for his repentance, & at last tides it with the hellish stiffness of his own stubborn heart, so that he cannot endure the speech or presence of *Moses* any more, Exod. 10. 28. *get thee from me, see my face no more, for the day thou seest my face thou shalt die*, God sends *Moses* no more, but sends his plagues to destroy his first born he wil not see the face of *Moses* he shal feel the fierceness of the wrath of the Lord.

Doct. *He that is truly pierced by the Ministry of the word, he is busy to enquire and ready to submit to the Ministers of God making known his mind therein.*

They who never had thought of their own condition never craved nor cared for the counsel & direction of any in the things of God, as seeing no need of either, but now the case is otherwise every mans heart is now ful of fears & his mind ful of doubts, and he is stored with questions; they al with one mouth, and one mind as one man that had but one heart, *they said* one spake it, but al consented *q. d.* that is al our cases, that is al our desires men and bretheren, we can find no rest in our hearts nor resolution in our judgments, we could not but come and seek and we shal be more glad to receive counsel and guidance from you, *So that broken heartedness doth two things which are the two Parts of the Doctrine.*

1. *It makes men busy to enquire.*
2. *Ready to receive direction from Faithful Ministers.*

The first part of the doctrine.

A true sight and sence of a mans sinful condition sets men upon the search, awakens men out of that senceless security in which they were buried, makes them look about them, puts them upon the serious consideration of their own spiritual condition, not long before they scant thought whether they had souls to be saved, or sins to be pardoned, or mercy and grace to be looked after, they never put it to the question what they could say or shew for heaven, but now they begin to think with themselves what they are; this is set forth to be the guise and behavior of converting sinners when God begins to tamper with the hearts, for the alteration of their states. *Jer.* 50. 4. *In those dayes and*

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and at that time, when God hath ſtirred their hearts to recover themſelves out of the Babiloniſh Captivity, (*Deliver thy ſelf O Sion, thou who dwelleſt with the Daughter of Babilon*) See how they beſtir themſelves, *Going and weeping ſhall they go and ſeek the Lord their God*: weep ſtil, and go ſtil, ſorrow ſtil, and ſeek ſtil; they who ſtirred not a foot before, nor looked after the Lord, nor their own happineſs and comfort. So it was with *Ephraim*, when the Lord began to work his heart to a right apprehenſion of himſelf, *Jer.* 31. 18. while he was in his Natural Condition, he was like an *untamed Bullock, unaccuſtomed to the Yoke*; but when the Lord had taken him to task, then he begins to conſider with himſelf, and betake himſelf to new thoughts, verſe 19. *When I was turned, I repented; when I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh*: Thus *John* Baptiſts Hearers, when once the Word wrought kindly upon them, it made them al buſie and inquiſitive, even as one man, *Luke*, 3. 10. to 15. *The People they came and asked, the Publicans they enquired, the rude Soldiers they alſo began to demand, Maſter, what ſhal we do?* This diſpoſition of ſpirit ſet men a going who ſat ſtil before, as in a dream. The covetous Publicans whoſe thoughts were after their gain, how to compaſs their Commodities from every Quarter: the rude and unruly Soldiers, who cared for nothing, nor thought of nothing, but how to ſatisfie their own luſts, and ſuit their own corrupt deſires, al was fiſh that came to net; and the foolish multitude who meerly followed the ſight of their eyes, after a bruitiſh manner minded that which concerned the outward man, What ſhal we eat? what ſhal we drink? what ſhal we put on? In likelyhood had never a thought of God, nor of themſelves, whether there were a Heaven to be expected, or a Hel to be avoided, but followed their preſent pleaſures; ſee now how ſerious and inquiſitive they be, they now conclude ſomething muſt be done, and they would willingly know

what

what course they ought to take: when God sets upon mens souls, then they set upon their Service.

The Reasons are Two:

Reas. 1. *Because they now feel the evil they never feared before, now they see the danger and misery hanging over their heads, able to overwhelm them, and sink their hearts, which they never suspected formerly.* And therefore now, not only Reason teacheth them, but their own safety, Nature and self-love wil force them to bestir themselves to the utmost of their strength, and improve al their abilities to the utmost of their power, to prevent such over-bearing evils, and provide for their own relief and welfare; and so the more to use al diligence here, because they are unknown, and yet spiritual, which concern their eternal estate, and therefore cause most fear, and threaten most hazard, and therefore constrains them to seek far and neer for succor and relief. So it was with the Prodigal *when he came to himself*, before he had not the right use of his Reason, nor conceived of things as they were, but as frantick men fal into fire and water, and fear nothing, because they consider of nothing; but now being come to the use of his understanding, he considers, *How many Servants are in my Fathers Family, that have bread enough, and I perish with hunger?* Luke, 15. 17. then he bestirs himself, *I will arise and go to my Father, and say, &c.* So it is with many prodigal, sinful, deluded Creatures; they spend time and strength, and lay out themselves; see nothing, and therefore fear no after-claps, until the time of Famine, and day of distress and horror come in upon them; they never saw need of reading, hearing, prayer, seeking and enquiry: but now when they find themselves besieged with sins and plagues, and dayly expect the execution to be done, Heaven frowning, Hell gaping, their Consciences accusing, and themselves dropping down to the Grave, and their souls to Hell, they think it high time, and more than time to bestir themselves,

Luk. 15. 17. 18.

selves, to do what they can, and to cry for help and direction in so desperate distresses and danger; I wil arise, and go confer; I wil arise, and go enquire; I wil arise, and go pray; *The whol need not the Physitian*, therefore they do not send, nor yet are they willing to receive, nor care to enquire, or take any Physick; but when the Disease grows fierce, and life is in danger, then post out Messengers, send far and neer for a Physitian, search every bush, enquire of every man what might be good, what have you found? what would you advise? So here. Thus God dealt with his People when he would awaken them, *Hos.* 5. last, *In their affliction they will seek me early*; then Hos. 6. 1. *Come let us return to the Lord, he hath wounded, and he will heal.* *The full soul loaths the Honey Comb*, but never looks out for provision; but *the hungry soul*, that is now starving, runs if he can, if he cannot run, he wil go; if he cannot go, he wil creep; enquires where he may have food, uses all means to get, he wil buy, or beg, or borrow. So here, &c.

Math. 9. 12.

Prov.

They begin now to see the folly of their own conceits, and that confidence which in former times they had; how easily they could procure their own comfort, and how certainly without fail they could provide for the safety of their own souls, and everlasting happiness; they said it, and thought what they said, that there needs not so much trouble to get to Heaven; at the time of sickness, and before their departure draw on, it's but bewailing their sins, and seeking to God for mercy; Oh but when it comes too, they find another gates matter of it than ever formerly they did imagine; they are at an utter loss with themselves, they know not what course to take, which way to turn; they know not, poor Creatures, how to come at a Christ, nay how to seek him, how to attain either pardon or peace: And therefore now (though too late it may be) they see they know not

Reas. 2.

work, which in pride of heart, ſaid and concluded, they could do any thing: They are made of nothing but doubts and queſtions; *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, thou would'ſt ask of him, and he would give thee Water of Life.* John, 4. 10. *Thou knoweſt not that thou art poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked,* Rev. 3. 17. Thoſe that are ignorant of the way, wil enquire of any man, ask of any child: So a ſoul under theſe diſtreſſes and ignorances, wil enquire of any Chriſtian, ask of any Miniſter that may direct him in the way he ſhould take.

Uſe. *This Doctrine is a Bill of Inditement againſt a world of ungodly men, who live in the Church, who may here read their doom, and the dreadfulneſs of their own condition diſcovered beyond all denial*; namely, to be ſuch who as yet were never troubled, never ſo much as touched with a through ſight and ſence of their own baſeneſs, and curſed corruptions of their Natures and lives; they are ſo far from being broken by the Truth, and batterred al to pouder by the power of an Ordinance, that indeed the day is yet to come that they felt any ſad blow, from the bleſſed Word of the Lord ſet on upon their Conſciences, by the hand and good Spirit of the Almighty, and that is evidenced out of the Text: had they received the like impreſſion with theſe Converts, they would have been put upon the like practice with them, had their ſpirits been broken as theirs, they would have been as buſie to ſeek out for ſuccor and relief as theſe do; but alas this duty appears not ſcant in the lives of men, therefore this diſpoſition is far enough from their hearts: If thou had'ſt been ſick as they, thou would'ſt have enquired of the Phyſitian as they; but where is the man almoſt that hath put the Quære to his own Conſcience, propounded the Queſtion ſeriouſly to others, out of the ſence of his own want, for to make narrow ſearch of his own eſtate, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall I do?* He never ſaw need to do any thing,

thing, nor had heart to do any thing; men therefore had never desire nor endeavor to seek direction; when he hath been loth that men should put him to pains, and press him to diligence, and doing in this behalf. They make it a matter superfluous, and needless trouble thus to be taken up; what needs all this ado? (say they) and therefore they are willing to sit down with ease, but do nothing: they are setled upon their dregs, and endure not stirring, it's a kind of Hell, and like the appearance of Death, to be pressed to *diligent inquiry, to make their Calling sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 11. The state of the World is somwhat like that which the Angels express upon the proof they had, when they went to survey the frame of things, *Zach.* 2. 11. *We have walked to and fro through the Earth, and behold all the Earth sits still, and is at rest.* Walk we from one Plantation to another, from one Society to another; nay, which is yet a further misery, from one Assembly to another, *all the Earth sits still, and is at rest*; there is no stirring, no trading in Christianity; men cheapen not, enquire not after the purchase of the precious things of the Gospel, what shall I do to be quit of my self? what shall I do to be severed from my sins which have pestered me so long? prejudiced my peace so much, and if it continue, wil be my ruin? As though Christ were taking the Charter of the Gospel from the present Generation, and were removing the Market, there is no stirring, Trade is dead, men come dead, and sit so, and return so unto their Habitations, there is deep silence, you shal not hear a word. What spiritual good they get, what they need, or what they desire; men are willing to do nothing, and therefore they wil not enquire what they should do; certain it is, the Word never wrought kindly upon thee, nor prevailed with that carnal and hard heart of thine to this day in any saving manner for thy spiritual good: thou never knewest what it was to be lost, if thou never had'st a stir of heart to enquire the way to Sion, it's made an Ar-

ment of a man in the bonds of Iniquity, in the depth of his Natural distemper, *Rom.* 3. 11. *They have no understanding, neither do they seek after God*; and it's made an evidence of Satans Rule, *Luke*, 11. 21. *When the strong man keeps the Pallace, all his goods are at peace; but when a stronger comes and binds him, he takes from him all his Armor wherein he trusts, and divides the spoil.* παυοπλίαν *The House and Pallace*, is the Heart and Spirit of a sinner; *his Armory* and Furniture, are all the noysom lusts by which he maintains possession, and exerciseth his power in the inner; and as the Apostle saith, *fighteth against the soul*; as despair is the *Head-piece*; unrighteous, and careless, and unconscionable walking, is the *Breast-plate*; carnal Reason the *Sword*; Unbelief the *Shield*; and an indisposition of heart to yield to the terms of the Gospel, is that whereby the sinner is prepared to walk in the way of wickedness, *his feet shod*, fit for every evil work. While Satan is thus furnished with the Armor of Darkness, *all his goods are at peace*, he doth without any trouble, act the soul, and wrong the Comfort and happiness of the soul, and so the Honor of the Lord; there are *his goods*, it's all he desires, endeavors, takes as the gain of his Labor and Diligence in his Temptations: Doth Satan act thee by his Temptations, and to encrease both thy guilt and ruin thereby? and are these his goods in peace? Thy sin, thy woe, thy misery, is Satans wealth and substance, he hath what he wil, and doth what he will, and thou art not troubled with any thing, nor wilt trouble him by seeking out for relief and deliverance, enquirest not what thou mayest do to be rescued and delivered; know, Satan hath *his Armor* on, and he seeks thy heart as his Pallace, under his Soveraign Power and Command to this day; nor is there any preparation, nor the least inkling or intimation of deliverance of that wretched soul of thine: thou livest in this secure condition as one that meddles not, hast nothing to do with the things of Grace

1 *Pet.* 2. 11.

Grace and Life. As it was ſaid, *Judges* 17. 7. of the men of *Laiſh*, *who dwelt careleſs, quiet, and ſecure, far from the Zidonians, and had no buſineſs with man*: It's a Picture of this Laiſh-like temper, and ſecure condition of thine, thou art far from the ſtate and grace of Glory; thou haſt no buſineſs with Chriſtians, with Ordinances, Officers; thou haſt nothing to ſay, or to demand touching eternal Life; thou knoweſt nothing, yet enquireſt not what thou ſhould'ſt do; haſt nothing, yet ſeekeſt not for help and ſuccor; thou haſt no buſineſs that appertains to Heaven with any man living, thy buſineſs lies not with the Word, and the Lord and his Word have as little to do with thee; that ſhews thy heart is not there, nor thy portion there. As each mans affection and expreſſion of himſelf is where his imployment lies, as buſie as a Bee, they carry their buſineſſes in their very Countenance, their words ſound that way, their behavior, look that way, every man hath ſomthing to ſay in that which pleaſeth, that which pincheth him, and queſtions go up and down, what ſhal we eat? and what ſhal we drink? and wherewith ſhal we be cloathed? And yet we may *hearken and hear* (as *Jeremiah* ſpeaks) *and no man ſaies, what have I done, what ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Jer. 8. 6. Look into the Families where men live, obſerve the occaſions with which men meddle, and employ themſelves, enquire of the perſons with whom they converſe, you ſhal ſcarce hear a queſtion; every man is ſeeking after the things that may ſuit his own carnal heart, and yet ſeek not after the things that concern their peace: Look at men in their neceſſities, or take them in their imployments, there is no end of mens enquiries: In ſickneſs we fil mens ears, weary mens hearts with enquiries what means may be attended, what courſe taken up: let it be matter of Commodity that may accrew, men are as ful of their queſtions, as the Sun-ſhine is ful of motes; what? and when? and after what manner may occaſions beſt be contrived, to com-

paſs a mans content? This ſeems good, but how may that be avoided? That is more profitable, but how may this or that inconvenience be prevented? And yet as though men had no ſouls, or had nothing to do with Grace, and Life, and Salvation, they have nothing to ſay for Heaven, nay, nor about Heaven. Our hearts work not this way, which argues the Word never wrought kindly, either for the diſcovery of thy ſin, or the breaking of thy heart for it. If men were wounded they would fil your ears with their ſighs, and your hearts with their complaints. So here, they would not give God reſt, nor you reſt, if their hearts were reſtleſs in their diſtreſſes; *thou keepeſt mine eyes waking, I cannot ſleep*, ſaies the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 77. 4. God will keep your Eyes waking if ever he work kindly.

Object. *Why? But is it not poſſible, yea ordinary, even for Reprobates themſelves in the time of their troubles and terrors, when fears and doubts aſſail them, to be earneſt in their ſeeking, importunate in their complaints, and endleſs in their queſtions, with every Chriſtian with whom they meet, and every Miniſter that they know?*

Anſw. Yes, It is common even for Hypocrites ſo to do, therefore thou haſt not attained the higheſt degree of the Profeſſion of an Hypocrite, doſt not reach the carriage of a Reprobate; they are far from Heaven, and thou art far off from them; thou art in the loweſt Rank of Hypocrites, thou haſt not yet had a look towards Sion, or a thought of eternal happineſs: thou art not come into the Market, not ſo much as cheapened the things of Grace: Though therefore the preſence of ſuch a carriage doth not certainly evidence a good Eſtate, yet the abſence of it, doth undoubtedly demonſtrate that thou art in the worſt eſtate of men. It is, as we uſe to cal it, a *Negative Note*, though the Affirmation of ſuch a thing, doth not diſcover the Truth of Grace, yet the denial evidenceth the want of Grace; conſtantly to reject

ject and refuse, is the note of a wicked man, and yet to attend the means of Grace, doth not discover a Godly man: For as it is in Nature, there are many things in man which go to the being of man, which yet do not distinguish him; as to have a Sensitive Nature, &c. without which he cannot be a man, yet to have sence doth not difference man from other Sensitive Creatures. And hence it comes, the denying of sence destroyes the being of a man, yet the presence of sence doth not difference a man from a Beast. So it is here, a disposition busily to enquire after the means of Grace and Mercy, doth enter the being of a broken-hearted Christian, yet it doth not difference a Christian truly broken-hearted from one Legally terrified; look at it in their general carriage, and enquiry after the Ordinances, and things of God.

But is there no difference between the search and busie enquiry which a heart truly broken, makes from that, which an Hypocrite under Legal Terrors, doth sometimes expres. Quest.

I Answer: If we look at the Specialty and Spiritualness of their Carriage, there is a Three-fold Difference: *Answ.*

In the Ground whence they arise; that enquiry which comes in truth from a heart kindly broken, *it issues from the filth and poyson of his sin*, which puts the thoughts of a sinner beyond his compass, as not able to conceive, and the heart beyond his hopes, as not able to undergo; *My sins are a burden too heavy for me; they are innumerable, I am not able to look up*: Therfore the thoughts and heart set the whol man a work; the Tongue to complain of, and enquire a way of release, the endeavor to pursue it. That of the Legallist issues out of Nature, which feels her hazard, or therefore seeks for her preservation, and cals for help; thus *they howled upon their beds, but did not cry to God*, Hos. 7. 14. As the Lyon in the grin roars for relief. 1. *Psal.* 38. 4. *Psal.* 4. 40. 12.

In

2. *In the End*, the terrifyed hypocrite he is frequent in his complaints, busy in his enquiries, sometimes *to gain ease* and that is most usual, sometimes also *to ingratiate themselves in the hearts of the faithful and to gain their esteem* that they should look at him and account of him as a broken-hearted Saint, as one that hath been exercised with the indignation of the Almighty, *Esau* would have his blessing, *Judas* his guilt removed. A broken-hearted sinner seeks not his ease or honor but God, *going and weeping they shal go and seek the Lord their God, not themselves*; he seeks Gods face to engratiate himself with him, and to get his favour.

Jer. 50. 4.

3. *In the efficacy and vertue*, because his business lyes with sin, his seekings wil be restless and importunate, and enquiryes for direction help *against sin as long as sin and he lives*. The Legallist when his *terrors and fears are removed, or eased*, he hath done what he would and he desires to do no more, and therefore enenquires no further what he should do.

Use 2. *Heres matter of* DIRECTION, *we hence see the ready way, and never failing means to set an edge upon our desires and put life into our endeavors, to make us sedulous and busy in seeking after the Lord and the things of his grace. Maintain a right sight of the vilenes of thy sin, the deceitfulnes thereof which wil delude thee before thou beest aware, and may be, endanger thy peace and Comfort before thou dost discern it.* Maintain a right sence and feeling of the evil of thy sin, this broken-heartedness as at the first, thou wilt then enquire as at the first, pray & seek as at the first. As it is with the Patient when the disease is over, health and ease coms on apace, he then begins to lay aside physick, to neglect his diet prescribed, never seeks to the physitian nor sends for further counsel, Oh but if his old fits befal him, he is then as careful to use his old Physick, send presently to the Physitian for fresh counsel, and advice. So it wil be with the soul of a sinner, when once the wound is healed, & God hath allayed the venom of the vengeance

which

which sin brought with it, & the heart growes up in some evidence of the work, and assurance of Gods love, so that the worst is past and the danger is over. men begin to lay aside their diet, and that careful diligence they ought to use, the daily renewed repentance they should take up, until the Lord lets loose their lusts afreth, their old fits and force of their sinful distempers seem again to overbear them, which hazard their truth and peace they begin to find their hearts, and prayers, and begin again to be awakened to the work. The Corinthians were careless either of the sin or misery of incestuous persons, or their own duty and careful endeavor to reforme until the Apostle writes sharply to them, and affects their hearts with godly sorrow, this set them al awork, *what care? in what fear? what zeal did it* provoke them to express? both in their carriage towards him, and in their daily course before God? 2. *Cor.* 19. 11. *Pauls* new conflicts with his corruptions and the body of death makes him renew his complaints, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Oh wretched man that I am who shal deliver me from this body of death*, when God *left a splinter in the flesh, and sent a messenger of Satan to buffet him*, this made him to best ir himself to purpose, 2 *Cor.* 12. *I besought the Lord thrice*, that is many times, and with much importunity, he sends post hast to heaven for supply. In the City besiedged, the way to make them wakeful, and to give their attendance, is to give the alarum upon every occasion; He that is in a certain ague, though upon his better day, he feels no fit, yet he is fearful, and warchful o himself where he goes and what he does, because he expects his fit, & he knowes he may hasten it and hazard his life? It is so with a Christian, we are in the leaguer continually, though not assaulted, our sins like di eases lye in our bones though we have a better day now and then, expect the assault and give the Allarum and look for our fit before it come, that wil make us busy and watchful to prevent it that it, may never come

In

In their affliction they wil seek me early Hos. 5. last. God is forced sometimes to withdraw, and go away, that he may force his Saints to seek after him.

The Second Part of the Doctrine.

They are ready to submit to the Ministers of God, making known his mind, the very words which they expresse argues such a dispostion of spirit, they come as *Patients* to the *Physitian* to know his advice that they may take it. *As clyents to the Lawyer,* to understand his counsel that they may follow it. So it was with *Paul* when God set upon his heart, intimates his mistake to him that it was hard for him to kick against the pricks; *he trembling & astonished, Lord what wilt thou have me to do? Acts,* 9.6. not his own wil but Gods he attends now, not what he would have done, but what God would have done, *Psal* 45.5. *When Gods arrows are sharp and stick fast in the hearts of his enemies, the people fal under him.*

Reas. 1. *Because the pride of their carnal reason is now conquered, the Lord hath dashed, and confounded the overweening conceit which once they had of their own worth and the excellency of their own abilities;* they now see that al the wit in the world doth not keep common-wealth in their brain, that their apprehensions are not Oracles, but that they are and have been miserably mistaken and see now by experience the vanity of their imaginations, and that they have been deluded by the darkness of their own foolish hearts, *when they professed themselves wise they became fools,* Rom. 1

And therefore they are ready to lay down their own conceits, and to follow Gods counsels, they begin to fear and suspect their own blindness, and therefore yield easily to the directions of others. A man that is bewildred, and hath lost himself, he is content that a child should shew him the way, that he conceives hath but any acquaintance with the coast. So it was prophesied of Converts in the time of the Gospel *Isa.* 11. 6. *That a Child should lead them,* even the meanest that brought arguments should prevail with them, especially the

the ministers of the Gospel of whose wisdom and faithfulness, and acquaintance with the way and wil of God they have had feeling experience.

That stubbornness and rebellious resistance of their wills out of the sovraignty whereof, they durst set themselves against God and heaven, is now tamed and subdued. So that they dare not gainsay but become pliable to the holy and acceptable wil of God, and ready to take the impression of his good pleasure, when it appears and is presented before them; The hardest peble when it is broken and punned to pouder, it wil take any impression that is put upon it, So *Job* joynes these two *Job.* 23. 15. 16. *Job is afraid of Gods presence, for God hath melted or made my heart soft and the Almighty hath troubled me,* and hence when God had schooled him out of the whirlwind and tamed the stiffness and perverseness of his spirit, see how he yields himself to Gods hand, to do any thing with him, even works like wax, *Behold I am vile, once have I spoken but I wil say no more, twice but I wil proceed no further.* Reas. 2.

Because they have found the truth of the word, and the terror and authority thereof made good upon their souls, and that they cannot now but acknowledg and admire, and therefore dare not but readily submit thereunto as knowing, they cannot resist but with their own ruine, and there own safety consists in subjection thereunto, which they could never formerly be perswaded of, before he found it by woful experience, how *terrible God hath been out of his Sanctuary,* Psal. 110. 3. *thy people shal be willing in the day of thy power,* so the woman of *Samaria* when the truth of our Saviors speech pierced her heart, like a two edged sword, she then fals to admire him when before she had dispised both his speech and practise, Reas. 3.

INSTRUCTION *here see the reason of that stiffeness and way-ward unteachableness that sometimes appears in the hearts of Gods own,* they are awk to know, wea- Use.

riſh to give way to the evidence of Gods counſel, they want broken heartedneſs, and therefore want this meaſure of teachableneſs; as it is with an unruly Colt it coſts him many a blow firſt, before he be brought to be at command; ſo it is with the unruly heart of man, which muſt have many ſad ſtroaks and blows before it be throughly ſubdued to the obedience of Gods wil. Men never knew what ſin meant almoſt. *Iſa.* 66. 3. *I wil look* ſaith the Lord, *i. e.* with a gracious look of mercy *upon this man that trembles at my word*; that trembles at a counſel leaſt he ſhould deſpiſe it, at commands, promiſes, leaſt he ſhould not receive them. *The Lord is terrible out of his holy places.* When the terror of the truth of God is fallen upon the ſoul, then what ever exhortations, directions come from the word he dares not reſiſt or gainſay, but ſubmit and fal under the wil of God made known there; then a man wil fear to go from under a command as to go to hell it ſelf.

Uſe. 2. EXAMINATION *we may hence know whether ever the word hath wrought kindly, and left this impreſſion of broken heartedneſs*, this is a never fayling evidence, As thy ſubjection is to the word, ſo thy contrition is. If the word hath pierced thee, the word wil awe thee. 1 *Theſ.* 1. 6. *Our Goſpel came not in word but in power; and ye became followers of us and of the Lord.* Did the word over-power thy heart? then thou art a follower of the faithful Miniſters of God who left thoſe impreſſions upon thy ſoul; the word is mighty through God and brings every thought into the obedience of Chriſt, hence 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. *they gave up themſelves to the Lord and then to us by the wil of God*, ſo far as they ſet forth the Goverment of Chriſt.

This fals heavy upon two ſorts;

1. *Thoſe that are open rebells*, ſons of *Belial*, that acknowledg no Lord no Law, what to tremble at every word that is delivered? No they are not ſuch Babies. &c.

Conſpirators

Conspirators and traitors that pretend and profess subjection and yet maintain rebellion in their hearts, they yield fainedly, but when it comes to reallity to stoop to the authority of the truth, they wil not, these are traitors to the truth; as the Swissers wil be enemies when they cannot serve their own turns, and friends when they do; As the Papists in England they are content to take the benefit of the Law, but when it comes to take the oath of Allegiance they wil by no means do it because they are sworn Vassels to the Pope, or Pensioners to the King of *Spain*, though they equivocate to serve their own turns: so these when they come to take the oath of Allegiance to set up Christ as supream in their hearts and minds, to submit to the power of the truth, then they take up armes against Christ and his word, and wil not submit. This is the evidence of *a servant of sin*, Rom. 6. 17. when men *receive the power of the Gospel* they are not servants of sin else they are, *Psal.* 45. 5. a man that wil not fal before the truth, the arrows of Christ never stuck fast in his heart.

What shal we do?

We have done with the parties, to whom the complaint was made, *men and brethren &c.* The complaint it self *is ful of bitterness*: some things are implyed in it, some things expressed. That which is implyed in this complaint may be attended in four particulars.

1. *Their ignorance and inability how to help themselves.*
2. *An absolute necessity to come out of this condition, which now they find themselves in.*
3. *A secret hope to receive advice and relief from the Apostles.*
4. *The price and excellency they now put upon the freedom from their sins*; for this is the end of their request,

that which is supposed and implyed as the end of their complaint namely *to be delivered from that which was the plague sore of their souls*, and did so extremely pierce and pinch them. That which the jalour in the like case did openly mention, and these also did intend, *Sirs what shal I do to be saved?* Acts. 16. 30. namely from those sins which now overwhelm his soul.

Doct. *Sinners in distress of Conscience are ignorant and unable to help themselves.*

The manner of the speech proclaimes so much to each mans experience, at the very first inckling and hearing of it. They speak as men at their wits end *what shal we do?* we know not what to do, it's beyond our skil and above our reach; either to bear or avoyd, to make an escape from his sins and the plagues due therunto. As *Ruben* said when he went down into the pit, & found not his Brother *Joseph* there, (being sold before) *he returned to his bretheren, the child is not & I whither shal I go?* Gen. 37. 30. So it is with the soul in distress of Conscience, seeing it self forsaken of God. Because he hath forsaken him by his backslidings and departures, God is gone, my God is not, to this poor soul, and I whither shal I go? whither shal I look? if to heaven there justice wil reject and condemn me, if to hell there the Devils are ready to torment; should I take the wings of the morning & fly to the utmost parts of the earth, there the wrath of the Almighty shal pursue, and if I look into my own soul, there is a Conscience to accuse and a hell of horror to confound me for ever. We know not which way to take miserable we are because of our sins, and that which makes it more miserable we know not how to get either relief or release. We are at a loss in our estates, we are at a loss in our thoughts how we may find succor and deliverance, you that are the seers of

Israel

Israel, shew us the way of help. *Paul* acknowledgeth as much at his first Conversion, *Acts*, 9. 6. when the Lord had met him, and discovered the evil and danger of his way, he then conceived he did not wel, and yet could not conceive what to do, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* I do not know, and therefore I cannot tel how to do thy wil, nor yet how to procure mine own peace: When the Israelites were driven to perplexities by the expression of Gods displeasure against their rebellious carriage in chusing themselves a King, and therefore cryed out, *Pray for us, for we have sinned*, 1 Sam. 12. 21. they durst not go to the Throne of Grace themselves, but forced out of guilt and horror, they were ready to go the wrong way, and therefore *Samuel* by seasonable prevention stops their passage, *Ye have sinned, yet turn not aside from following the Lord*, q. d. the distressed sinner as a Traveller in amazement, when they have once missed their way, the further they go, the further they go aside.

Reasons are Two.

Reas. *The waies of Grace and Life, unto which men are to turn at the times of their Conversion, they are hidden and secret*; and men in their Natural Condition, when the Lord is pleased first to stop their passage, and build a wall before them, they are wholly unacquainted with the narrow path that leads to Christ and life, by reason of that inbred blindness of their minds, and the dayly aberrations of their lives, and that from their Birth. For this is one part of the description of the Grace; *Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads unto Life, and few there be that find it.* Matth. 7. 13. It's but one path, and a narrow one; there be thousands of thousands of bye paths and waies to miss it, and there is but one way to hit it, and therefore hard to find it self, and to him that is blind in truth impossible. Therefore men are said to be *strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance*

norance that is in them, Eph. 4. 18. As men that never went a ſtrange way, they cannot tel whether they go right or wrong, they know not where they are; and as Travellers ſpeak when they are in remote places, I am out of my knowledg, I was never in theſe Coaſts before: So it is with all men Naturally, they are but ſtrangers when they fal unexpectedly upon the Coaſts of Converſion and Contrition, they are at a loſs, and wholly unacquainted with the Coaſt of ſuch a Condition, know not where they are, or what to make of it or themſelves, *Rom.* 2. 17. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of mens conceivings of the waies and works of Chriſt, yet in their Natural blindneſs, *Deſtruction and Calamity are in their waies, the way of peace they have not known*; they think they are in the road to Heaven, when they are poſting down to Hell; yea, even ſuch who have lived long under the means, and have heard much of the Lord Jeſus; nay, it may be have preached much of him, and that with no ſmal approbation; yet when they are come to theſe ſtraights, and brought to theſe amazing horrors of Spirit, they plainly ſhew, nay, are forced nakedly to profeſs they never had any ſound diſcerning either of the work of Grace, or the way to Chriſt, but are very Children, Novices, No-bodies in theſe Spiritual Myſteries. So it was with theſe in this place, in ſuch a multitude now brought home to the faith, no queſtion but many of them had enjoyed many means, and been long trained up in the Truth of the Scriptures, and the Doctrine of *Moſes*, and the Prophets, yea, *Paul* profeſſeth of himſelf before his Converſion, *That he profited in the Jews Religion above many of his equals, and that he was exceeding zealous in his way*: yet when the Lord met him in his way, and ſpeaks to him from Heaven, he knew not what way to take; but *Ananias* is ſent on purpoſe to teach him, *Acts*, 9. The ground is here when the Spirit comes to convince, to reveal ſin to the ſoul, and a mans ſelf to himſelf, things now begin to be

be real, and seem other than ever formerly they did; sin is another thing, Grace, and Godliness, Faith, and Christ, and Salvation, are other things than formerly they did appear unto the soul. So that the sinner is as it were in another world, wonders where he hath been, and what he hath done, stands amazed at his own folly and madness, that he should so wonderfully mistake, that he should ever take contentment in those sinful carriages, which are the only cause of his ruin and confusion, sees he is gone so far out of the way, that how to get in again he is wholly ignorant. It's true, men speak much of sin, and can talk much of Christ, & may have heard and read much of faith, yet know nothing but empty words, not know the thing when they should use it: He that spels by rote, may be wil not spel a Letter of the Book when he is put to read. So your formal Professors, Carnal Hearers, may be out of Custom and constant attendance upon the means, can make a shift to speak out their Lecture, and speak somwhat freely of Faith, and Christ, and Conversion, and yet come to distress, and feel the stroak of the Truth and terror in their hearts, if they be put to read to the use, and improvement of any thing heard; they know not the thing, nor their own hearts, nor yet the Nature of their distempers. So it was with *Nicodemus*, our Savior was constrained to point with that fescue, and put his finger upon the Word, and tel him, *that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit*; yet he is in a mist, understands not what Christ meant, nor what his own condition was, *How can these things be? John*, 3. 9.

As through their in-bred blindness, and unacquaintance with the Waies and Works of Christ, they cannot discern the means of relief; *So by reason of their distraction under the pressures of their present extremity, they are weariſh to attend, and unwilling to listen, and conceive aright, any means that might procure their succor and comfort.* As we see in present fears and affrights, *Reas.* 2.

frights, or extream or ſudden ſorrows, we are not our ſelves, and ſo become indiſpoſed and unfitted to conceive of that which is offered plainly to conſideration, and which otherwiſe we were able to judg aright of, and improve it to our preſent advantage, *Heb.* 12. 5. *A perſon fainting under afflictions and troubles*, is wholly unable to deviſe any means to ſupport him. So here, when mens thoughts are hurried with apprehenſion of evil, which in the moſt dreadful manner are preſented to their view, and their hearts poſſeſſed with the feeling of them, they have no leiſure to lay out their thoughts and minds to provide for means of help themſelves, nor yet to receive them when they are offered by others, *Exod.* 6. 9. The bitterneſs of the oppreſſion was ſo great that they liſtened to the voyce of their miſery, but would not hearken to *Moſes* his Counſel.

Uſe. INSTRUCTION. *That men in diſtreſs of ſpirit, when and while the Lord is pleaſed to exerciſe them under his Almighty hand in this Work of Contrition, they are ſoon miſ-led by the deluſions of the ſubtil, and carried aſide by the corrupt counſels, and cunning devices of ſuch as be falſe Teachers.* They who are feeble, are ſoon foiled, even by the aſſaults of ſuch as have either policy to undermine, or power in any meaſure to oppoſe. They who are dim ſighted, much more if blind, are eaſily and preſently miſguided and led out of the way, and he not able to prevent it, nor yet in any way of probability like to get in, and recover himſelf.

Now this is the under and weak condition of broken-hearted ſinners, they are out of their ken and compaſs, the waies of God in that ſo ſad and ſpiritual a Work and Trade with the ſoul, they do not know, and therefore are unfit to ſeek, and ſo in reaſon unable to find it out; and therefore it's eaſie for them to be led into *Samaria* inſtead of *Dothan*, and the Devil by his Factors to

to lead them into falſe waies, for which they are commonly hardly recovered; if they grow falſe at this turn of their life, he may there be lodged to his dying day; for this is like the fal in a mans Cradle, may be, never get fully recovered again: And upon this ground it is that falſe Teachers when they make a trade to wind into mens affections, and win them to the entertainment of their erroneous conceits: If they would ſpread their erroneous Opinions which go under pretence of Free Grace, and painted with the appearance of holineſs and exactneſs, they hearken out where any be in perplexity of ſpirit, in trouble and diſtreſs of Conſcience, they fal in with them immediately, and work them to their own minds and wils; becauſe they are tender hearted, and fearful to refuſe whatever comes under the color of Free Grace, they are now at a ſtagger and unſettlement, ignorant how to help themſelves, and therefore likely and ready to receive what help can be lent; they know not what way to take, and therefore may be led any way upon the ſudden, and at a preſent puſh. Theſe are the Devils Brokers *that beguile unſtable ſouls*, 2 Pet. 2. 14. And *Paul* was afraid that the new Converts might be cozened by the wily carriages of the falſe Apoſtles which would work upon their ſimplicity, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *I fear leſt by any means, as the Serpent beguiled* Eve *through his ſubtilty, ſo their minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity of the Truth in Chriſt*: We ſee in the flight of Fowls, when one hath received a ſhot, either to the breaking of the Leg, or the laming of the wing, and ſo lags behind their fellows, not able wel to find the way, or not to fly far, the Fox perceives a Prey, which he purſues. And it is obſerved in the Countrey whence we came, Kites and Buzzards obſerve when the Lambs fal, and thoſe they prey upon with the firſt opportunity, if not prevented. It is ſo here, Theſe falſe Teaches are like theſe ravenous Birds of Prey, and ſubtil Foxes: If they perceive any who are of a wound-

ded ſpirit, that the Arrows of the Almighty ſtick faſt in them, and that they are forced to hang the wing, and go drooping and diſcouraged, at a loſs in their own thoughts; they preſently make a prey of ſuch, they know not how to relieve themſelves, and therefore are eaſie to liſten to any that wil confidently pretend waies and means of relief.

Uſe 2. *Here is matter of* ADVICE *to all mourners in Zion; thoſe that the Lord now hath upon the Anvil, and is melting and framing to his own mind to make them Veſſels of Mercy*; they muſt be marvelous wary, and carefully circumſpect that they be perſons of approved faithfulneſs and ſincerity, to whoſe Counſel they do commit themſelves, and betruſt their condition; and when they have ſo done, then they muſt keep a prepared heart, what Advice they are not able by reaſon to gain-ſay, they have then I ſay (then, when ſuch a one of tried uprightneſs and faithfulneſs is choſen) great reaſon to yield unto. They know not how to adviſe themſelves, therefore fall before the Advice of others; they know not how to do themſelves good, and therefore ſhould be content to receive good from others. As it is in Nature, it is ſo in Grace; Women in Childbirth, when they come to travel, they wil not take every one that offers her ſelf to do them Service, but hearken after ſuch who are experienced Midwives, and they attend their Counſel, and take their help, when they are not able to ſuccor themſelves in ſuch neceſſities. So it is in this Spiritual new Birth, and Travel of the Soul; let him be a man of Truſt and Experience, able to Midwife the Soul in the day of miſery; then leave your ſelves to the Counſel of ſuch when you are at a loſs, and not able to counſel your ſelves; and it's a ſpecial print and impreſſion of the work of Gods Faithfulneſs, that he commonly carries the hearts of the perplexed, and their own ſpirits carry them to ſuch who have been moſt exerciſed under ſuch tryals, and are of tried ſincerity;

as

as theſe came not to the Scribes and Phariſees, who happily had been leaders and abettors to them in their ſinful miſcarriages, their hearts told them they were as bad as they, and for ought that they knew, as ignorant of a better way as themſelves, and therefore they were unable to give advice, and they not willing to repair thither to ask it. And it's commonly ſo with ſuch, if men be left to themſelves, and not over-ruled with Carnal Friends, or elſe ſome ſubtil wretches that come in ſheeps cloathing, preſs in upon them, beyond either their thoughts or deſires: then happily they may ſurprize them, and prevail too much; and if once they gain an intereſt, and ingratiate themſelves, they are hardly brought off; becauſe that which firſt takes place in caſe of diſtreſs, leaves the deepeſt impreſſions upon the ſpirit: But when men repair to the wiſe-hearted in their extremities; take in this Truth, and keep it ever with you, *I am ignorant, and know not at this time in this neceſſity to direct my ſelf: therefore as I ſhall ſeek God in ſuch means of Counſel, ſo I will yield and deliver up my ſelf unto that direction, which in reaſon according to God, is ſuggeſted, and I have no reaſon, but only fears and ſuſpicions of my carnal heart to oppoſe.* So God ſends *Cornelius* to *Peter*, Acts 10. 6. blind men, and ſuch as are in darkneſs, and can ſee no light nor way neither, they ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be led by the hand by ſuch who can lend them light and help alſo.

A ſinner pierced truly with ſorrow for ſin, ſees an abſolute neceſſity to come out of the ſinful condition in which he is. Doct.

Therefore they do ſo bitterly complain in the Text, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* Let's do any thing, ſuffer any thing, be any thing; let's not be, nor

remain in this Condition whatſoever it coſt us, whatever become of us. They put in no proviſion, no caution upon which they would receive Counſel, or which they would deſire might be allowed or granted; but we wil do any thing that we may not do the Devils drudgery, or the dung-hil ſervice of ſin; be any where, or any thing, rather than under the guilt and power of thoſe loathſom abominations which have lorded it over us. Therefore I cal it an abſolute neceſſity of being quit of, and coming out of this wretched eſtate.

And this *Abſolute Neceſſity*, may be conceived in Three things:

1. *There is no terms of tolleration of ſin, which can be propoſed*; there be no Articles of Agreement which can be offered, no way of Compoſition that can come into conſideration: As ſuppoſe I may have with ſecreſie, with quiet, with credit; nay, ſuppoſe my Conſcience would not trouble me; yea, the Lord abate me of his Anger for the while; nay, I may ſuck out the ſweetneſs of it without any ſuſpicion, without any vexation or diſtraction to my ſelf for the while. No, this will not do the deed, nor ſerve the turn, if I have al theſe, and have my ſin, and be a ſlave to that. No, their complaint is of the preſence of ſin, not of the want of theſe, *Mark*, 9. 49, *If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out; if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it's better to go maimed to Heaven, than having both eyes and feet to go to Hell.* So the ſoul would be content to be maimed in credit, quiet, comfort.

2. *Maintains no reſervation of any ſin of any kind*, if one, if little, if ſweet, if profitable; No, the ſoul would *not touch an unclean thing*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. He doth not ſay, no groſs unclean thing, but nothing, no not to touch it. So our Savior to the yong man; *There is one thing wanting, Go and ſell all that thou haſt.* Mark, 10. 21.

Admits

Admits no case of exception, what ever difficultie or danger may be presented or can be conceived in the compass of a mans apprehension, nay there cannot befal any case or pretence, which carries any reality with it, why the soul should continu any entertainment with any corruption, and therefore it casts out al demurrs, pleas, pretences, suppositions that carnal reason might cast in, if one should loose his friends and favor and fellowship of such as are or have been never so near or dear to him why that should not stick. *Deut* 33.9. nay not onely to leave them but to do execution upon them, for so the case may be, and it's supposed by interpreters when it is said *the Levites knew not their brethren*, that hath reference to that story *Exod.* 32. where the Levites were enjoyned to *slay each man his brother.* So *Peters* advice here following the text, *save your selves from this Crooked generation.* Yea were it the loss of mans life, that also comes within this necessity; there is no necessity to hinder to part with this life, there is a necessity; he should part with his sin *Dan.* 3. 17. 18. *we care not to answer thee in this thing O King, our God can deliver us but if he wil not, we wil fal down and worship thy golden Image.* 3.

The Reasons are three.

The sinners thus affected they feel experimentally the severity of Gods justice, which peremtorily proceeds against the sinner for whatever sin it meets withall, and what ever the sinner be. That whereas men besotted in the security of a sinful course, they perswade and promise to themselves freedom, and escape from the fierceness of Gods displeasure, or at least such a mitigation of it as may allay the extremity of the fear of the evil they did expect; or take off the pleasure or pursuit of sin in which they did delight, yet now under the stroke of conviction they feel by proof they were misguided in their thoughts, and disappointed in their hopes; For that such is the rigour of Gods righteous proceedings, that he Reas.

he doth and wil undoubtedly ſeek and find out al, and is abſolutely reſolved to execute puniſhment upon al, and therefore there is an abſolute neceſſity they ſhould renounce and abandon al, even the moſt beloved and leaſt ſuſpected diſtempers, which formerly like Atheiſts they fooliſhly thought God did not attend, or at leaſt would not trouble himſelf withal, but wink at them or paſs them by, which now they find far otherwiſe, Gods juſtice is peremptory in puniſhing, and therefore they muſt be as peremptory in abandoning their luſts, they cannot avoyd the juſtice of the Lord, and therefore they muſt avoyd their ſins, whatever deluded hope they had formerly of Gods connivence, but now they ſee themſelves deceived be the corruption never ſo ſecret he wil ſearch it, who profeſſeth *Zeph.* 2. 11. *that he wil ſearch Jeruſalem with candles, and puniſh them that are ſetled upon their lees, who ſay in their hearts, the Lord wil not do good neither wil he do evil*; the lees ly at the bottom ſuch as no eye ſees when the Veſſel is ſet on broach, they carry the matter ſo covertly as if it were beyond either apprehenſion or ſuſpicion, but God wil ſearch it. It was ſpoken of the times of *Joſiah* when reformation was general, and with great applauſe and approbation of al hands, religion ſeemed to be entertained: yet men ſettle upon their lees, had their retireing corners for their corrupt luſts, while they carryed al before them, and ſeemed to be moſt exact. *Iſa.* 29. 10. 16. there was a generation *that digged deep to hide their counſels from the Lord, but their turning of things upſide down ſhal be eſteemed as potters clay, q. d.* even thoſe privy-conveyances are as the clay in the hand of the Potter, God ſees them and wil act and order as he ſees fit, thus *Achan ſaw and took and coveted and carryed and hid it ſecretly in his tent*, but God found him and his falſneſs and forgeries, and forced him to acknowledge ſo much. As the ſecreteſt ſo the ſmalleſt tranſgreſſions divine juſtice ſtabs the heart of a ſinner withal.

Joſh. 7.

Not

Not onely *Achan* who committed, but *Israel* who did but neglect their watch and care, to keep him from or recover him out of it, they also smart *Jos.* 7. 1. an evil which the best of them neither saw nor considered, therefore the Lord was constrayned to mind *Joshua* of it, in the day of humiliation, what means this, *Israel hath sinned* vers. 11. as who should say the hand is in a wrong box thou missest that which is of the most weight, Moses *his hasty expression in smiting the rock,* or Lots *wife looking back* a man would have thought not to be evils of so hainous a nature, and so heavily to be punished. It fares with the contrite and broken-hearted sinner, as it did with the woman sick of the bloody issue, who strove to touch our Savior that she might be healed, our Savior openly discovers her evil, carriage, who was it that touched me? when she saw that she could not be kept secret, she came trembling and acknowleuged what she had done. So when the soul under the horror of Gods revenging hand, perceives that indeed he cannot be kept secret, but now God sees his evils and wil pursue them, he fals down flat before the Lord, and concludes the absolute necessity of it that God should punish every evil, and therefore it's absolutly necessary he should part with it, this the wise man intimates, *Eccles.* 11. *last. rejoyce O young man in thy youth and let thy heart chear thee in the wayes of thy youth but know thou for all these things thou shalt come to judgment, q. d.* diddst thou indeed know that? thou wouldest not, thou durst not, go on in the sins of youth. *Reas.* 2.

Now the sinner (I say now) *in this state and under this stroke, he finds an inability in himself, nay utter impossibility to bear the weight of the least sin, which is thus charged upon the soul by the Almighty* and therfore is now put beyond *ifs* and *ands* conditions and suppositions that his carnal reason coutened him before withal to maintain his distempers. But concludes definitively, no

Gen. 19. 26.

no more ado, no further talk; I see I cannot beare the sting of the least sin, and therefore I must not keep it: Heretofore he could make a shift to shake off the fear of the threatnings of the word, which were denounced to stop the mouth of his Conscience, which whispered bitter things in his bosom, and to weare away the terror that stuck in his heart; and therefore fondly conceited he could make a shift to beare the weight that should befal, that he might possess and injoy the pleasures and content his corrupt courses did promise to his carnall heart. But he finds it otherwise; his heart tayles him under pressure of one sin, *Psal.* 130,3. *If thou shouldest mark what is done amis Lord who should abide it.* An ignorant soul settled in his secure condition out of self deluding pride of his own spirit, would presume that he could abide the misery and so the danger that might accrew to him by his distemper, and so is fearless to maintain it. But now he findes he is not able to abide that which his sin doth bring let him put the best of al his abilities together to emprovement *Ezek.* 21. 14. *can thy heart endure &c.* the time was they thought their hearts could endure, the frollick Epicure, and flinty hearted sinner, he wonders at the feebleness of the distressed and broken-hearted, that they should be such children, persons of such feeble and milksop dispositions to sink at a Sermon and be troubled at the words of a Preacher, tush his Conscience is cannon proof, he can heare and bear al and yet pleas himself and bless himself in the pursuit of his lusts, as before times. Oh, thou maiest do so, while men deal with thee, thou mayest avoyd their blow or make an escape out of their hands; but when God shal deal with thee in that day when *thou fallest into the hands of the living God.* *Hebr.* 10. who lives to torment the to eternity what wilt thou do? The shadow and appearance of the hand-writing shook *Belshazzars* heart when he was quaffing in his cups, in the ruff of his riot, what would the stroke of that hand have

have done? and this hand now the sinner finds, and finds himself absolutely unable to bear the evil of his sin, and therefore concludes it absolutely necessary to be rid of it whatever it cost him. He knowes now by proof, this evil to be such as that no other can equal it: the evil such as no contrary good in this world can countervail it. And therefore he sees reason and chooseth never to have any good in this world, rather than to have his sin, to part withal, rather than not part with this, or be plagued with it. Rather undergo al evils, and suffer the utmost extremity, than suffer his sin to remain with him; *Math* 16. 26. *What wil it profit a man to gain the whol world and to loose his soul, or what shal a man give in exchange for his soul.* 469

The broken in heart he sees now by proof also, *the cursed combination that is amongst corruptions, a league betwixt lusts, if any corruption rule in the heart, it makes a man a slave to what ever distemper presents it self unto the soul,* In a word. He that wil keep one sin, he keeps himself under the power of al corruptions, he keeps off the power of al the means of grace and good for working upon or prevailing with the soul for its everlasting welfare. Reas. 3.

The keeping of one sin keeps possession for Satan, and his right unto the soul, and under the Allegiance of all the accursed lusts that either can come from without or arise from within: one exerciseth the Soveraignty but he is a slave to al, as special occasion may be offered, he wil serve any distemper that he may suit the beloved distemper of his heart 2 *Tim.* 2. *last. the Devil takes them captive according to his wil.* and therefore its said of the thorny ground, *in that the nick of temptation they fel away Luke*, 8. 13. Whither fel it. Namely it gave entertainment to whatever either error in opinion or miscarriage in practice suited its sinful end, or satisfyed the carnal desire of the soul. He that misseth the right way, he is for any by way that comes next in view; a I.

City that is under the command of the chief Captain, they muſt be ſubject to the outrage of any or al of his ſouldiers, or underlings, that wil but execute his wil and attend his tyrannous commands, ſo it is in the ſoul, if one luſt rule it, its a ſalve unto what ever diſtemper may be ſerviceable and ſeem to give content to that, they went *as they were led* 1 *Cor.* 12. 1. 2.

2. The heart pierced with this through ſorrow perceives alſo by woful experience, *that the keeping of one corruption keeps off the power of any ordinance that it cannot work kindly or prevayl effectually for any ſpiritual good; it way-layes the work of an ordinance*; The heady and rebellious Jewes *would have a King*, and they would hear no counſel nor yet take the favoreſt argument into Conſideration, that did concern their peace and proſperous proceeding in their way 1 *Sam.* 8. 18. the outragious Idolaters run madding after their Idols, they caſt off al the advice of the Prophet with ſcorn & contempt *Jer.* 44. 16. *As for the word which thou haſt ſpoken to us in the name of the Lord we wil not hearken to thee*, Nay when they are ſet upon it, they profeſs plainly, *there is no hope, but we wil walk every one after the vanity of his own imaginations Jer.* 18. 12. ſo that the ſinner now ſees and reſolves, either he muſt part withal, or els for ever be deprived of al good, and be a ſlave to al ſin.

Uſe. TRYAL, *We may hence gain undoubted evidence, whether ever our hearts were ſoundly ſoaked in this Godly ſorrow for ſin yea or no.* Contrition if it be of the right ſtamp it hath a conſtraining power with it to force the heart againſt corruption; It ſilenceth al ſhifts, puts by and puts off al falſe pleas, ſcatters al ſluggiſh pretences, that are made in behalf of our diſtempers, In a word, it caſts the ballance againſt al carnal reaſons, that are rife and ſtirring, and uſually caſt in by Satan, and our ſenſual diſpoſition to keep us, in our former eſtate, and to procure ſome, if not toleration, yet mitigation

tion in our proceeding against our lusts; It layes and leaves a pressing necessity upon the soul that overbears, what ever may come on the contrary part, to plead for any connivence for any sin in any kind, As we say in the Proverb, *there is no reasoning against sence*, a man hath no patience to hear words, perswasions or appearances which are against a mans feeling & experience; If any stander by should perswade a man the potion is pleasant when a man tasts it bitter, and his stomach loaths it; or that the fire is cold when he finds it scorch and burn; he can hardly give him the hearing, but disdains him an answer; say what you wil, I regard not what you say, shal not I trust mine eyes, or so far befool my self as to go against mine own feeling? I pass not that you speak in that behalf. So it is with a broken hearted sinner, what ever Satan shal suggest, his carnal friends and companions counsel, his deceitful heart pretend, or plead what need he be so strict in his way, so severe against his sin, so resolute to abandon al his former courses, and his antient companions with whom he hath had so much content, there is no such need now to set upon the work, herafter wil be time enough, or no such danger in maintaining a dalliance with such and such distempers, which are no great matter, nor is there any great harm in them, the burdened sinner hath not patience to hear, but disdaines to enter parly about such things as he hath past sentence upon, long before this day, tel not me, talk not to me of such things: there is no speaking against mine own experience, I have felt and found the contrary, my heart knowes otherwise and that by woful eperience, therefore I pass not what you speak. God wil allow none, I can bear none, no not the sting of the least sin, when God wil let it in, nor you neither when once the Lord wil pursue you with the least expression of his displeasure; I cannot have any sin seem it never so smal, but I must be under the power of al, nor ever have any possibility of any good. As *Ruth* to

Naomi when she advised her to stay or return when she came with her, she puts an end to al such perswasions, *intreat me not, for I wil not leave thee*, so it is with a soul sensible and soundly affected with the evil of his sin, he is beyond entreaties and carnal reasonings, he wil hear nothing, the soul is overpowred with a soveraign kind of absolute necessity, he hath found by proof, which puts to silence what ever can be said to the contrary *q. d.* cease reasoning about that for which no reason can be alleadged, perswade not that which hath no ground of perswasion, it cannot admit a case of exception, therefore I wil not once take it into consideration nothing can be spoken of weight or worth, and therefore cease to speak further. Its not necessary I should not be poor, imprisoned, despised, *It's absolutly necessary I should not be sinful.* I have no charge from God, I should not leave and loose my life, my liberty, but I have a peremptory charge without al exception; I should leave my sin. Art thou come to that with the three Children, *Dan.* 3. 17. 18. *Our God can deliver, but if he wil not, be it known unto thee we wil not fall down and worship &c.* Its necessary we should maintain the truth of Gods worship, its not necessary we should maintain our lives. Resolvest thou with them *Hos.* 14. 3. Asshur *shal not save us, nor wil we go down to* Egipt, *nor say any more to the work of our hands ye are our Gods* I wil no more be proud or perverse, no more loose or vayn, no more listen to the pleasing dalliance of mine own heart, that Dale is mown, that is determined long since, by long and woful experience, its beyond consideration, keep thy spirit ever in that temper, and thou wilt keep an undoubted evidence of the sound work of contrition with thee.

Ruth, 1. 16.

Hence therefore this Doctrine is a Bill of Inditement against two sorts of fals-hearted Professors, who fall short of this saving work of God; and so fall short of Christ

Christ and Heaven, fall away totally and finally from the Truth in the end.

The first sort are your NEUTERS, who study to compose all their course with prudence and conveniency, but conceive it not so safe to put a necessity upon each Service in this kind, but only serve their own turn; and that is the compass they steere by, and walk by. As your Neutral Towns, they pay to both the Armies, but fight for neither, only keep their own safety and peace. So is it with those Neuters in Religion, they would capitulate with Christ and the Rule, and enter into Articles of Agreement with the Gospel; therefore they take up, profess and practice Godliness, but with Cautions and Provisions, that they may walk at liberty in their own deluded hearts; but to put it to the pinch of this absolute necessity, and that they may dispense as they see fit, that they wil decline, they count it, and conceive it matter of comliness and conveniency, nay prudence and Christian Wisdom, nay necessary if occasions suit to attend the narrow waies of Gods Command: if occasions suit, provided that no over-bearing disadvantages, and desperate inconveniences, and hazards appear to the contrary, they plead a dispensation to relieve themselves by, to be necessitated and tied to inconveniencies, they conceive it unreasonable: Thus the Chapman, he is willing and ready to keep his day, and make his payment, and perform his Covenant according to promise, if means and moneys come in comfortably, and his occasions may be served, as wel as his Creditor payed; then it's necessary: But if straights lie upon him, and he cannot pay, but with much prejudice to his Estate, either to part with that which is profitable, or upon low rates, and for loss; then he desires he may be dispensed withal, and it's not necessary in that case to pay. If a man were before-hand in the world, then it were fit; but because he is at an under in his Estate, therefore it's not necessarie.

The

The wife that is froward, she conceives, had she a head and husband so wise, and able, and gracious, there were reason and necessitie she should carry her self in a meek, and sweet, and humble manner: but one that is neither fit for his place, nor answers her comfort, nor his carriage so prudent as she could desire; if then she carry her self pettishly and perversly, in such a case, a tollera-tion may be given. So these persons put no necessity of parting with their sins, but of preventing their inconve-niencies. It's certain, thou never foundest the evil of sin, that canst take and leave thy sin with these exceptions; thou never seekest Christ for himself, but only as he may serve thee; not take his, but make thy own terms. But if ever God do thee good, he wil make thee know that God never laies a necessitie upon a gracious man (nor intruth upon any man) to sin, but a necessitie, and that absolute, he should not sin. And therefore al those pleas, alas my occasions many, my necessi-ties great, pinching extremities prevailed with me; but as soon as conveniencies suit, then I wil, &c. Therefore thou wilt be just and true in promises and performances, only when thou hast no necessities, when thy conveni-encies serve not for conscience sake: No, thou wilt find

Mark. 9. 43. 47. *thou had'st better go maimed and halt, with thy right eye plucked out, and thy right hand cut off, than to keep thy sins, and go to Hell with them.* When thy conveni-encie suits, thou wilt serve God; and when Gods con-veniencie serves, he wil save thee.

2. *There is another sort of Formal Professors, that pre-tend great kindness, and large affection to the Lord, and the Gospel*, and therefore profess they wil go far to ac-commodate the Lord Jesus, and give him full and free entertainment, *Only there is a reservation they make to themselves of that which shall not be much prejudicial to the presence of his Majesty, if God will abate them some one, that is all they look for.* As men that take in Mates, they let all, but reserve only a room to them-selves,

selves, and they conceive they go very far to pleasure them: So these men will keep some one lust, and they must be spared in that. *Rachel* reserves her Fathers Idols; *Ananias* and *Saphira*, they give half, and keep half, *Acts*, 5. 2. It's certain thou never knewest the evil of sin, if thou never sawest an absolute necessity to part with all. Thou sayest, *The Lord be merciful to me only in this*; No, thou wilt never have mercy if thou keep this. Thou sayest, *Is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?* It's certain, thy soul cannot live, if thou canst not leave this. 495

INSTRUCTION. *We here see the Reason of all that uneven and unsteady walking of many men*: Somtimes they are zealous, and somtimes cold and careless, men are off and on, somtimes so fearful that they cannot abide the appearance of any sin; somtimes bold to adventure upon that which they know to be evil. This is certain, either thou never had'st the work of Contrition, or thou keepest it not alive in thy soul: 1 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2. *You are puffed up, and do not mourn?* If they had mourned for the evil, they would have been zealous to reform. *Use*, 2.

DIRECTION, *how we may keep a readiness of heart to resist every corruption and occasion leading thereunto, that a man may have a steady, even spirit; keep thy heart affected dayly with the evil of thy sins*, and that wil over-bear al corruptions and inclinations to any sin at any time: As the Naturalists say of the Nightingale, she sets her Breast against a Thorn, that when she begins to nod, the Thorn may awaken her; he that lies hard, wil not sleep long. *Use.* 3.

Two Rules here.

Keep the Judgment setled, Conscience convinced, and Heart perswaded of this Truth, that the evil of sin is so great, that no evil is equal, no good can countervail it; and then this wil certainly follow, thou wilt rather chuse to have nothing in this world, rather than to have thy 1.

thy sin; and part with al profits, and commodities, and comforts, than not to part with thy sin; suffer any evil rather than sin; lose any good, rather than keep thy sin. Keep this in the thoughts of our hearts for ever; there is no evil like to my sin; *Matth.* 16.26. *What shall a man profit to win the world, and lose his soul?*

2. *Do not give a hearing to any consideration of any Cavil that is cast in to the Contrary.* Say it's past consideration, do not therefore entertain the motion: As in the Chancery or Courts of Justice, when a Cause hath been tried, and proved by Witnesses, and Sentence past upon it; if a wrangler shal then put in a motion, the Judg wil not hear him, but casts out his motion. Deal thou so with thine own carnal reason and heart; when thou hast seen and found the greatness of the evil of sin by thine own tryal and experience, if now carnal reason should put in and say, This is to be considered, and that is to be considered; cast out al these Cavils, give no audience to any motion made for any tolleration for sin, And this is the way to keep the Channel cleer, and the passage currant, that your souls may be carried cheerfully in the stream of Gods Truth; and that will make a man ever like himself; keep this Truth ever in your heart, there is an absolute necessity of it, I must not sin. It's inconceivable what this Truth in the lively work of it wil do.

Doct. *There is a secret Hope wherewith the Lord supports the hearts of such as be soundly Contrite.*

Though the case be dangerous, and their condition miserable, they do not cast away all as though it were utterly impossible; they do not say, *Men and Brethren, there can nothing be done*; we see nothing our selves, and we suppose you discern nothing, and we conclude

conclude there is nothing that wil or can do any good. Nay, their words ſeem to iſſue from another principle and foundation, what ſhal we do? *q. d.* there may be waies we ſee not, means of relief which we through our folly and ignorance of this condition, and unacquaintedneſs with the dealings of the Almighty, and his ſpecial and myſterious Diſpenſations with the ſons of men, do not conceive, nor can they come ſo eaſily and readily within our reach and apprehenſion; yet we ſuppoſe, you that are the Seers of Iſrael, and the Spiritual Phyſitians to the ſouls of diſtreſſed, ſinful Creatures: you that are of Gods Counſel, and acquainted with his ſecrets, we ſhould yet think it, there is yet ſomthing to be done; Oh that we may know it, and that direction that may do us good. So that there is a ſecret kind of unknown expectation in their hearts, as preſuming there is ſome courſe to be taken for their cure and comfort. It is true, ſomtimes there be ſtrong aſſaults of temptations caſt in by Satan, ſtrong Suggeſtions of impoſſibilities, which of a ſudden ſeem to paſs over the ſoul; when after long ſtrife and conteſtation held againſt our corruptions, we are frequently and deſperately foyled with the violence of our own diſtempers, and our own heedleſneſs, the ſinner out of height and too much haſtineſs of Spirit, is ready to fling away all. *I ſhall one day periſh: All men are Lyars.* The ſoul tired with enmity, and by conſtant conſideration, as it perceives; ſo it ſuppoſeth its condition forlorn, upon a ſudden puſh, may lay aſide all, willing to look no further; the Lord by this means in his infinite wiſdom, out of the deceit of our carnal Reaſon, and by a preſent pang and out-rage of pride, doth cruſh and confound all the pride and ſtoutneſs of carnal Reaſon, which by no other way happily could ſo eaſily be quelled; when our own carnal hearts conclude according to our miſguided apprehenſion, there is no way of eſcape, or means to ſhift. Where is now your wit that thought

to contrive, your power that thought you were able to bear up your heart?

But this is but a present push, like the rage of a Land-flood by some unexpected fall of rain, a hurry of Spirit, a swoun as it were: But when the soul comes to it self, as the man that swouned away, it lifts up it self, and looks out, *It may be*, and *it's possible.*

Let me therefore,

1. *Shew you in a word or two, the Nature of this Hope, and how it differs from that which is wrought in the true Beleever; it's wholly of another kind in the Nature, and the work of it.*
2. *The Reason why God leaves this Hope.*

First, Touching the Nature of this Hope, I term it, *a secret kind of unknown expectation*, by which the heart is carried on to look for relief and help, which out of the sence of its own burden, and preservation of it self, it willingly would have, but knows not where to find it, nor yet obtain it, if it did appear.

It may be discovered in two things:

1. *In the rise and ground of it*; the Lord leaves upon the Understanding of a contrite sinner, a real apprehension of his own Ignorance in such cases, and about such conditions, and yet consideration of the experience and knowledg of others, and expressions of Providence in such difficulties beyond his reach; both which lead the thoughts and apprehension of a man to look out, and provokes the heart in this restless condition, to put forth an endeavor, because al the passages of possibilities, are not stopped up, and means of relief wholly taken away. For be it he know none; yet this also he knows, there may be some way, and others may and do certainly conceive more wales of succor than his shallow conceiving is able to know, or hath skil to use: therefore look out he wil, and expect what further may be made to appear in the way of Providence, and from Direction and skil of others.

others. And hence it is they come here upon the enquiry, Men and Brethren, *What shall we do?* We confess we are at a loss in our own thoughts, we are strangers to our own hearts and distempers, and distresses, unto which through our just deservings we have brought our selves: yet you that have more experience, and better acquaintance with the Dispensations of the Almighty in such dealings with miserable Creatures, though we know not what may help our selves, yet we know that we have need to seek for succor, and we know not but we may speed; therefore we are resolved to put it to the trial, put it to the venture, see what will become of it. Upon this ground the Ninivites resolve to betake themselves to seek out for their own preservation from the destruction threatened and now drawing on, *Jonah*, 3. 9 *Who can tell if God will turn, and shew mercy, that we perish not?* We can tel it is beyond al the skil we have to contrive, and the power we have to accomplish any thing for our own safetie; but yet we cannot tel but God may turn from his fierce wrath, and leave a blessing behind him instead of a curse; as men who fal into strange and desperate sicknesses, the danger they see, but cannot see how to cure themselves; yet the apprehension of their own ignorance, and consideration of the experience and wisdom of others, is thus far a help, as to provoke them to seek out, not altogether without expectation of supply from them; for though they easily conceive they understand not what is good for their own sicknesses, yet they cannot conclude but others do or may understand more than themselves. So here, *Men and Brethren*, we knew not our sins before, nor now how to be quit of them. You that from God, know how to discover them, we cannot but think, but you may shew us a way of escape and deliverance, and therefore we cannot but enquire; though the sinner cannot say it wil, yet he doth not know it wil not be; therefore I term it *an unknown*

expectation, it ſecretly ſwaies and carries the heart.

Hence this Hope is confuſed and uncertain, it doth not, nor can bottom the heart in any grounded aſſurance, and ſettle it upon any certaintie, for the attainment of that which now it needs; *But keeps this on foot in the conſideration of the ſinner, that there be unknown paſſages of poſſibilities for his ſpiritual relief, and therefore this ſends the heart out after ſearch and enquiry.* And thoſe poſſibilities provoke the ſinner to put to, with what diligence and endeavor may be, to ſee what he can make of them, whether they wil hit or miſs, what wil become of him and his comforts, that he may know what to make of himſelf and his condition, which as yet he knows not, *Joel*, 2. 13. *Who knows if God wil return?* Who knows whether theſe ſins may be pardoned, grace and mercy ſhal be extended to this miſerable ſoul of mine? Who knows what wil befal? I wil yet try what ſhal befal, I wil ſee the iſſue: Such a kind of poſſible uncertaintie cauſed the Leapers to make proof what would be the event; they may ſlay us, and yet they may ſave us. So *Benhadads* Servants, *Ahab* may proceed in his indignation againſt us, and yet he may alſo pardon, therfore we wil try. So the ſoul here. Whereas the Hope that iſſues from Faith, and is found in the hearts of Beleevers as the fruit thereof, it hath a ſure and cleer ground, to ſuſtain and ſettle it, upon which a mans hopes may hang, and a ſpecial and infallible aſſurance it brings that wil never fail; that is as certain which is thus in hope, as that which we have in hand; that which is in expectation, as that which we have in preſent poſſeſſion; ſo called, *the Anchor of the ſoul, both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, Heb. 6. 19. *This Hope never makes aſhamed*, Rom. 5. 5. A man never miſſeth of his expectation, as the ground of our Hope is moſt ſure, and the ſucceſs is moſt certain, and the ground is the love and faithfulneſs of God in the undoubted performance of the Promiſes he makes, *Rom.* 5. 4. *Becauſe the*

2 *Kings* 7. 4.
1 *Kings* 20. 31, 32.

the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost. 501

Whereas this *unknown expectation* ariseth from the apprehension of some possibilities presented, which because they are unknown what they may be, therefore the restless contrite sinner puts forth his endeavour to prove what wil be the issue.

The reasons are three summed up in so many words.

Because this hope is a privy support wherby the heart is under-propped from sinking utterly under those unsuportable evils, which it feels now in part, & fears stil daily to come in upon them, and yet not onely beyond his strength but beyond his thoughts: and therefore as the Lord smites with the one hand, he sustaynes and upholds him by the other. Its the reason which the Lord alleadgeth why *he wil not alwayes contend least the spirit should fayl before him, and the souls that he hath made Isa.* 57. 16. As the wise Physitian when the disease is violent and the portion strong, he fortifyes the heart with some cordial, least while he should purge the humor he should destroy nature, the Lord is as a wise merciful Physitian, he would melt us by Godly sorrow but not consume us, he would have us loose our sins but not our hopes.

2. *This hope is an inlet into the soul whereby the Lord makes way for the work of the means*; hereby the contrite sinner is ready to attend, and give entertainment to the ordinances, while he hath any hope of any good to be communicated unto himself, because the patient knows not but the receit may do him good, he is content to take it and try what it wil do; whereas desperate discouragement stops al the passages, that the power of an ordinance cannot come to take place. Upon this ground it was *Naamans* Servants perswaded their Master, 2, *Kings* 5. 15. to give way to the means prescribed by the Prophet for his cure. If he should prescribe some great

great matter thou would surely do it, *how much more when he saith, wash and be clean*, if washing be a means of cleansing, the very possibility of cleansing should easily make him give way to prove what washing might do. When men bore holes, they drive pinns marvailous readily with much ease, hope sets open the heart to any ordinance, that it may easily find attendance and acceptance as the Cripple to *Peter Acts*, 3. 3. *begave ea expecting something &c.* expectation draws attention, he looked upon them as desirous to receive good; look what the spring is to the watch, the [illegible]se or weight to the minute no stirring without it, so is hope to our endeavors, *the Plough man plowes in hope, sows and reaps in hope*, 1, *Cor.* 9. 10. hope is the great wheel which carries the life of our endeavor; the runners would not run in the race, the marriner sayl in the Sea, were there not possibility for the one to attayn the goal, the other the haven, and the wise man when he would set al on going, he sets hope on work, keeps that in their eyes as that which would keep them constant in their course. *Eccles.* 11. 6. *Sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening let thy hand rest*, and what is the prevailing reason to provoak to such unweariable diligence? its hope of good, *thou knowest not whether this or that wil prosper*, or whether both alike; do both, if either of both may do that for us that is useful and may answer our need and expectation.

Use. INSTRUCTION, *We here see the reason why Satan draws out all his forces, useth the depth of his delusions on the one side, sets all the policy and power of Hell a work on the other side, and tryes all conclusions to the utmost of his skill, if by any means he might hamstring a mans hopes, put the distressed sinner beyond all possibility and expectation of Good*, and then he hath him close prisoner, past recovery, not once looks out for deliverance, he is his own, the doore off the hinges, nor opens, nor shuts to give way to them that pass in or out, but rather

rather is a trouble and ſtops their way. Its ſo here, if Satan can but unhinge the heart of the hope and expectation of relief and help, he makes the contrite ſoul wholly uncapable of al comfort or ſupport, there is no intercourſe between heaven and him, but is an out-lawed wretch an out-caſt, beyond the compaſs of Gods compaſſion and kindneſs, and ſits down confounded in his own accurſed condition and looks no further. It is a ſtratagem uſual and common amongſt commanders, in the taking of towns and walled cityes, when proviſions (as they underſtand) are low and ſhort within, they block up al paſſages; there is none can come out, none can go in (as the ſcriptures ſpeak in that kind) none go out to fetch or procure proviſion, none come in to bring any, and then they certainly conclude the citie is theirs, they muſt either yield or famiſh in ſuch a time, the like is the policy of the enemy and its a direful ſtratagem, and undoubtedly procures the ſpeedy deſtruction of the ſoul *that cuts off a mans hopes*, and blocks up the ſoul from the poſſible expectation of any good: it deads the heart, deads the ordinance, deads a mans diligence, no going out by endeavor to procure any ſpiritual releaſe, no coming in by the power of any ordinance to work any good in the ſoul, and hence it is that the enemy darts in ſuch temptations and by his wiles and ſubtilties caſts a man into ſuch a condition at leaſt to his perſwaſion, that its utterly beyond al conſultation and conſideration either of our ſouls, or others, and therefore there is no further ſeeking out but ſinking irrecoverably in a mans diſtreſs; And therefore Satan haſtens the ſoul in a ſudden hurrie of thoughts, to paſs ſuch determinations upon a mans eſtate, that makes him paſt appearance of recovery or alteration, and ſo beyond the reach of reaſon or relief. As either a mans doom is paſt and his ſentence determined in heaven: He was before al worlds reprobated, the decree is paſt and therefore never to be reverſed, or elſe the date of mercy is out, and

and the day of grace is paſt here on Earth; God hath ſet a period to his patience, and long ſufferance and thoſe are expired; *he wil not alwayes ſtrive with man*, and its not fit nor reaſonable he ſhould: *Jeſabel had her time to repent*, allowed by the Lord, and *ſhe repented not*, and then God caſt her into a bed of ſorrowes and ſlew her and her children, Jeruſalem had a day of peace, *Oh that thou hadſt known the things that belong to thy peace in this thy day, but now they are hid from thine eyes*; after the day was over, the darkneſs grew ſo groſs that ſhe did not, nor could not ſee things before her eyes and this is thy condition juſt ſaies Satan. So many motions of the ſpirit, ſo many checks of Conſcience, ſo many ſtirrings and ſtrokes under the ordinances, and yet out ſtood al, and ſo the time of mercy alſo, now it is too late. Or elſe ſurpriſeth the thoughts of the diſtreſſed with the hideous apprehenſions and remembrance of ſome helliſh diſtemper of ſpirit unto which the ſinner is privy; that its other and worſe than ever he yet conceived, nay al circumſtances conſidered, it amounts to no leſs than the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, *for if we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledg of the truth, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin*, Hebr. 10. 26. and this is your caſe ſays Satan beyond al queſtion, when after many motions of the ſpirit and perſwaſions caſt in, many ſecret entreaties, many miſgivings of heart, *do not do ſo, do not do it*, and yet you have diſpiſed the very ſpirit of Grace, you have been enlightened, and had many pleaſant relliſhes of joy and peace under the good word of God, and yet fallen back again, and ſo fallen away, therefore its impoſſible you ſhould be reſtored or renewed by repentance. Then ſhould you purſue that which is impoſſible to be attained, this dams up al paſſages, he cannot endure to hear of any, or attain the uſe of any means when its impoſſible to receive any benefit by al that can be uſed.

Thus

Thus Satan deals with the diſcouraged ſinner, as the thief with the weary traveller who is unacquainted with the way and loſt in which he is, he leads him out of the road far into the forreſt without the ken and cal of any paſſenger, or expectation of any means of relief and then he hath oppertunity to ſpoile him of his ſubſtance, & of his life alſo. So Satan deals with diſtreſſed, unacquainted with his own eſtate, under this trouble & ſtroak of contrition, carryes him aſide with ſuch miſconceivings of his own condition, that he leads him into by paths beyond the ken & compaſs of reaſon, & any righteous conſideration, ſo that he wil neither ſeek nor receive any helps: Be wiſe therfore, & watchful both for the diſcovery & perceiving theſe policies and deluſions of the enemy which draw on irrecoverable deſtruction with them; be ſure therfore you keep the rule of Gods revealed wil & direction for your own wayes, while you keep under the guidance of the word, you are under Gods wing; therefore in a word or two, to wipe away this falſe and wily pretence of the enemy. 505

When the enemy would have thee to pry into the ark, would carry thee to heaven to ſearch the rolls & records of Gods eternal counſel, thou muſt not repel ſuch temptations and repreſs ſuch pride & preſumptuous attempts of thine own vain mind, with that charge of the Almighty, tel him and thy own ſoul, *That ſecret things belong to God, but things revealed unto thee,* Deut. 29 29 Its Gods advice, *to ſearch and try our own hearts and turn unto the Lord.* Lam. 3. and not to ſearch his decrees. Look what is done in thine own heart, which thou mayeſt do and ſhouldeſt by warrant from the word and direction thereof. But to look into the decrees of heaven, what hath been determined there, is beyond thy line and laſt alſo. Its ſinful curioſity and preſumption which God doth condemn and thou muſt conſcienciouſly avoyd, know Satan leads thee out of the way, and therefore be fearful to liſten to him. 1.

Touching the date of grace and day of mercy, its true which the Lord hath taught *that God wil not alwaies ſtrive*, but its as true and evident alſo, *that while the Lord is pleaſed to continu means, to work with them and to awaken the heart by them, by convictions of conſcience and diſcoveries, of a mans condition and his corruption, and drives the ſinner to ſad thoughts and ſearchings of heart*, it's certain where theſe thoughts and ſtirrings are *there God is ſtriving by his ſpirit, in his ordinance.* And its Satans policy and purpoſe by ſuch vain cavils to withdraw the from under the power of the means, to take off thine attendance thereupon, and ſo endevor to profit thereby, when the *ſtrong man* cannot be *at peace in his houſe*, its certain that is the time when there is a *ſtronger than he*, is now breaking in upon him.

Luk. 11. 22.

3.

For the counterfeit appearance, and the ugly viſage of the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, which Satan would put upon thy miſcarriages, that by that means he might dead thy heart, and damp and enfeeble thine endeavors, and prejudice the work of grace and repentance that now the Lord cals thee unto, and thou alſo begins to look after, I anſwer (Not now to be long here) *the fear of the ſin, and complaint againſt it, that the heart is burdened with the apprehenſion and thoughts of it, and ſighs ſecretly to be kept from it, its argument enough that thou art free from this evil*, but God would make thee feel what ſin can do, *i. e.* put thee beyond help: and thine own emptineſs, who canſt do nothing for thy ſelf when it comes to a dead lift. In a word, if thou wouldeſt out-ſhoot the Devil, and out-work his temptations to promote thine own welfare and peace; *Be ever watchful and conſcionably reſolute, to oppoſe that evil moſt unto which he tempts thee; be moſt ſedulous in the improvement of means in the uſe whereof he would moſt diſcourage thee*, and the moſt of the deluſions wil come to nothing. *Reſiſt the Devil and he wil flee from thee* James, 4. 7.

Uſe 2.

Hence

Hence we may observe how easy it is with the Lord to confound a poor creature, to make his own hands his executioner, his own reason his ruin, nay his very conceit, and imagination of his mind to hasten his confusion, and that irrecoverably unto himself, If he shal but stop a little crevis of hope and lead aside a mans deluded reason into the appearance of impossibilities, as into a by path, the soul wil sink immediately, and be the greatest enemy in Earth or Hell, to its own everlasting happines he wil seek no good if wanting, wil receive none, if offered and pressed, nay expect none, what ever can be presented or layd forth, either in the works of providence, or in the infinite power of the Almighty God, and one Conceit wil do this if God set it on, as wel, nay more than al the Devills in hell could do, if they should set al the power of darkness on work. So it was with *Nebuchadnezzar, Dan.* 4. 30. God dashed al his power and pomp with one deluded and misguided thought, a conceit of a beast made him unfit for crown or Kingdome or Counsel or Communication of men, So that he that would have al for his honor and majesty, he neither knew what honor or majesty was, nor could receive any, nor yet his kingdom would give either to him.

EXHORTATION. *To provoke our souls by al good means to nourish this hope in our hearts for ever* Its said of hope that it comes from faith and is the *Anchor of the soul Heb.* 6. But its true of this also in its measure for where there is some hope of getting good it wil enable a man to endeavor. Look what the spring is to the weights of the clock there is no stirring of the one without the other as it is in nature, so grace in Physick, al the vitals must be especially supported because a wound in the vitalls is deadly, it is so in a mans spiritual course, if a man would have his endeavor kept, then keep his hope alive, and say, though I do not know it shal be, yet I do not know but it may be, therfore I wil hope and wait. Two rules here.

1. *Maintain in thine own heart an apprehenſion of thine own ignorance for thine own relief*: Men are apt to meaſure Gods dealings by their own apprehenſions; thou ſayeſt thou canſt not ſee it, yet maintain this in thine heart, I wil wait upon God; for there is more than I can ſee: *Iſai.* 42. 16. *I will lead the blind by a way that they do not know, and I will not forſake them, ſaith the Lord.* God hath unknown paſſages of Providence for thy good.

2 *Maintain in thy heart a real, conſtant perſwaſion of the All-ſufficiency that is in God for thy ſupply above all that which thou canſt conceive*, and that wil hold up thy heart, for the Load-ſtone of Hope is a poſſible good, *Matth.* 9. 33. *There was never ſuch a thing ſeen in Iſrael*; therefore though thy heart tel thee, there was never ſinner as I am, yet God is able to do that which never was done in *Iſrael*, therefore expect ſtil what may be: again, though thou canſt not conceive it, yet know there is a ſufficiency in God able to do it, *Job*, 5. 8, 9. *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe, which doth great things, and unſearchable, and marvelous things without number.* This may ſupport thy heart, and carry thee on with ſome Hope in a waiting way.

Doct *They who are truly pierced for their ſins, do in an eſpecial manner, prize and covet deliverance from them.*

For this is the ſcope of their complaint, and the end and aim of their requeſt, that they might be freed from that which they found ſo bitter, and indeed unſupportable to their ſouls; and it's of neceſſity implied in their ſpeech; that which in the like caſe was openly expreſſed by the Jaylor, *Acts*, 16. 30. *He came trembling*

and

and aſtoniſhed, ſaying, what muſt I do to be ſaved? not what ſhal I do to be eaſed of my deſtraction, cured of my fears, freed from my ſhame; but what ſhal I do to be ſaved from my ſin? he was plagued moſt with the remembrance of that, prizeth moſt freedom from it: the venom of his tranſgreſſion is that which lies heavieſt upon his heart; and thence it is, to be ſafe-guarded from that, is of higheſt eſteem in his account. Saved from the guilt of ſin, as that which ſets the Almighty at a diſtance from him, and raiſeth the controverſie between God and the ſoul, and forceth him to withdraw his favor, *and loving kindneß, which is better than life*, which *David* felt by woful experience, and therefore ſues with ſuch importunity, *Pſal.* 51. 14. *Deliver me from blood guiltineß O God, thou God of my Salvation, and my tongue ſhall ſing aloud of thy righteouſneß.* After the Commiſſion of theſe evils by *David*, the Lord threatened the ſending of the Sword that might hazard the ſafety of his perſon, and the proſperity of ſuch as ſhould ſucceed him. So *Nathan*, 2 Sam. 12. 10. *The Sword ſhal never depart from thine Houſe*: he threatens to raiſe up cruel and ſubtil conſpirators out of his own boſom and bowels; as *Abſalon*, out of his own Counſel and Kingdom, as *Achitophel*, and *Jeroboam*, whoſe plottings and conſpiracies ſhould ſhake the Pillars of the Kingdom, and the peace of his Government; all which were marvelous bitter potions, and heavy expreſſions of Gods diſpleaſure, but the ſting of all thoſe troubles, the venom of al that vengeance iſſued from his ſin, that is the evil in all evils, and therefore he overlooks al the reſt, and ſeeks moſt earneſtly to be reſcued from this; *Deliver me from blood-guiltineß*: it's not the cruelty of the Sword that wil deſtroy, nor the conſpiracy of Enemies that deſire to undermine my Crown, and Kingdom, and Safety, which I ſo much fear, nor ſo much labor to be freed from; *but deliver me from blood-guiltineß, O God of my Salvation*, q. d. that is the deliverance

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liverance I look for, and long for; and herein the Salvation of a God wil appear, and ſhew it ſelf, and wherein the ſoul of thy ſervant ſhal moſt rejoyce.

Saved alſo they would be from the power of corruption, which carries the ſoul *from God,* and *keeps* the ſinner *eſtranged from him*: and hence it is the repenting Church makes it the matter of their moſt bitter complaint, *Iſai.* 63. 17. *Why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy fear, and cauſed us to err from thy waies?* When they withdraw their hearts from God, he withdrew his gracious preſence and aſſiſtance from them: when they would not deliver up themſelves to the Authority of his Truth, and holy Will, to be ruled thereby, he delivered them up to the power of their own perverſe Spirits, they that would not be guided in his Fear by his holy Spirit, they ſhould be hardened from his fear by the perverſneſs of their own Spirits: this is the moſt dreadful plague of al plagues, the deliverance from which they ſo highly prize, and ſeek it with ſuch importunity, *Look down from Heaven, thy holy Habitation, where is the ſounding of thy bowels? are they reſtrained? Oh why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy fear?*

The price the contrite ſinner puts upon this deliverance from his ſin, diſcovers it ſelf in four Particulars.

1. *In the lack of this, the ſoul is not, cannot be quieted, though it doth enjoy all other things the World can afford, and his heart could deſire:* The want of this takes off the ſweetneſs of al the comforts, contentments, the ſap and reliſh of al priviledges, and the confluence of all Earthly Excellencies that can be enjoyed in this Pilgrimage, when the ſoul is under the preſſures of Gods diſpleaſure, and the tyranny of his own diſtempers, which carries him from God, and keeps him under the dreadful indignation of the Almighty, preſent him then with the beauty of al the choyceſt bleſſings that ever any man had on Earth, yea, what ever others hoped for, but in vain.

vain. Put them into his hand, conceive him possessed of the fulness of al worldly perfections, Crowns, Kingdoms, Honors, and preferments, the broken heart tramples al under foot with neglect, what is that to me, saies the soul? had I al the Wealth to enrich me, al Honors to advance me, Pleasures and Delights to content me, and my sins stil to damn me? miserable man that ever I was born in the midst of al these falsly conceived comforts. This sowr Sawce spoils al the Sweet-meat, this dram of poyson makes deadly al the delights and pleasures that possibly can be attained or expected. As *Absolon* when he was recalled from his Banishment, and had the liberty and use of his House, and all the conveniencies and helps that were at his Command, but was charged not to see the Kings face: upon a two yeers tryal he found a straightness of all his Comforts in these enlargements; therefore he thus expresseth his resolution to *Joab*, 2 Sam. 14. 32. *What avails me to be at Jerusalem, and in my House, to come from* Geshur, *if I may not see the Kings face? let me see his face, and let him kill me.* It is so with the broken-hearted sinner; What avails it me to be compassed about with al conveniences my heart can desire, and be compassed about with my corruptions? to see all Earthly happiness heaped up together, but never to see the face of God in another world? the belly filled, and back cloathed, and house stored, and the soul damned, and cast out from Gods presence, *in whose Presence, there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for ever more?* These are but dead things, sapless shadows, and are to a man of a contrite Spirit, as though they were not, nay the more he hath, the more trouble he hath, because there is more sin, and more guilt, more curse and condemnation; he sees in all, and expects by all from God, and so remains restless in all.

He is content with this, though he want all the rest, because he prizeth this more than all. Skin for Skin, and 2.

and al that a man hath, will he give for his life; & life and al for the Salvation of his ſoul. For ſin now he ſees it, now he hath found it to *be more bitter than death*; and therefore to be ſaved from it, he judgeth, and that truly, to be better than life it ſelf: willing not only theſe things ſhould not be, but that himſelf ſhould not be, that he might not be ſinful: Let the Lord take all away, yea life and all, only take away my ſin, and it ſufficeth; he counts it the beſt day that ever yet dawned, the beſt news that ever came to his diſtreſſed Conſcience, if he can gain any aſſurance, get any evidence, but one good look from Heaven, a ſmile of Gods face and favor; that the ſins he hath ſeen, he ſhal never ſee them more; the corruptions that have peſtered and plagued him in his dayly Converſation, indiſpoſed him to do the Duties God required, and unfitted him for the mercies Chriſt hath purchaſed, God hath tendered to him in his holy Word: That pride, that ſtubbornneſs, thoſe paſſions, that perverſneſs, and ſelf-willy waywardneſs of heart that hath been the plague-ſore of his ſoul, have interrupted the comfort of his heart, peace of his Conſcience, communion with his God. The very poſſibility and expectation that the Lord may ſave him from the guilt and power of thoſe prevailing diſtempers, ſupports his Spirit. But if he can but live to ſee the day that the thing is done, he deſires to live no longer: *Lord, let thy Servant depart in peace, ſince mine eyes have ſeen thy Salvation*, Luke, 2. 29, 30. Since thou haſt ſaved me from theſe mighty *Goliah* luſts, mighty ſtifneſs of ſpirit, that could out-bid al Convictions, though never ſo plain; gainſay al Arguments, though never ſo ſtrong; ſlight al Directions though never ſo evident, mighty ſelf-confidence, and helliſh haughtineſs of Spirit, whereby I could ſwel above man and means, and God himſelf: *Let thy Servant depart in peace*; This Peace, let it never be interrupted; this ſaving power of thy ſpirit never weakened, never enfeebled more. Let me loſe my

Eccleſ. 7. 26.

my life with the Philistims, let me die that they may never live more. And therefore the distressed Christian sees not the meanest Christian in the most miserable condition, but he prefers him above al the Potentates on Earth, and wisheth himself in his place. Oh if my soul were in his souls stead, saved from his corruption, therefore he is in a safe and a blessed condition. *Salvation*, if it be of the right stamp, *to deliver from sin*, not to ease from plagues and sorrows, such a kind of saving carries ever satisfaction with it, hath a satisfying fulness which answers unto al poor and imprisoned, yet saved though; persecuted, reproached, yet saved though; despised and killed, and yet saved; delivered from his sin, there is no evil of the first or second death that shal hurt him, or have any power over him: And therefore the contrite sinner contents himself in this, as *Jacob* in a like case, *I have enough*, Joseph *is yet alive*; I have enough, my soul shal yet be saved. In a wrack, he that saves his life, is abundantly satisfied. When so many thousands suffer wrack, split al their Professions, Hopes, and Comforts upon the Rocks and Sands of Pride and Self-love; Oh what a mercy, satisfying mercy, that thou who wert in as much danger as they, stands alive upon the shoar, when they are dying, and drowning, and damning, under the power of their sins. 513

The Contrite sinner that sets this price, he is resolved in good earnest readily to endeavor any thing to compass that he makes so much account of, q. d. *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Command what ye wil, we shal do it; give what Directions ye please, we shal follow them; prescribe what means you see fit, we shal improve them; what ever it is you shal advise or enjoyn, be it never so cross to our own carnal hearts, never so hard and hazardful, we shal not haggle and dodg with you, but we shal endeavor it, and set about it with out delay. What shal we do? what ever it is that may be useful, we shal do what we can; and Oh help us to do 3.

what we cannot out of our weakneſs perform, or out of our ignorance ſo readily conceive how to accompliſh: So they *Iſai.* 30. 22. The Converts there, it's ſaid, *They ſhall pollute the covering of Silver, and ornament of Gold, and caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, and ſay, get thee hence.* The price and worth of their Image might have enticed them; if not to have kept them, yet converted them to their own uſe; but they caſheir them wholly, without the leaſt conſideration of any Commodity that they might have contrived for their own content therefrom. So *Zacheus*, Luke 19. 8. When once he began to be ſenſibly affected with his corrupt and covetous courſe, and the danger thereof, and the evil therein, ſee how comfortably reſtitution (which is ſo difficult a work) comes off a hand, without any grudging, becauſe that was the means appointed by God to quit his heart and hands of the guilt of that ſin. *Behold Lord, half that I have, I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man by forged Cavillation, I reſtore him four-fold.* So laſtly, the holy Apoſtle *Paul*, when the Lord Jeſus had diſcovered his ſin, and abaſed his heart in the right apprehenſion of it; ſo that he is come to Gods bent, *What wilt thou have me to do? Behold I will ſend thee far hence to the Gentiles*, Acts, 26. 17, 19. *He did not conſent with fleſh and blood*, nor ſo much as pretend either doubt or difficulty, but immediately addreſſed himſelf to follow the direction. That which a man prizeth indeed, he wil bid fair for, nor wil he ſcotch for a little coſt, but is reſolved to have it what ever it coſt, and therefore ſticks not for the coſt at all. So it is here, a contrite ſinner comes eaſily and reſolutely to Gods terms, to do any thing.

4. *He that ſets this price upon Salvation, and deliverance from ſin, his heart is upon it, and his prayer is improved for the moſt part for this particular, his thoughts about it dayly.* Liſten to him in his ſecret devotions, his confeſſions about this, his Petitions ſpent upon this,

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he harps upon this string stil. But for things of the world they are out of his mind, his thoughts are not about them, as though he wanted nothing, or cared for nothing, or thought of nothing else but this, Oh deliver me from my sins. Ask him what he would have or desire, if he might obtain and have what he would; he answers, Oh that I might be saved; as *Abraham* for *Ishmael*, *Gen.* 17.18. Oh that *Ishmael* might live before thee; so he for his own soul, Oh that my soul may live before thee: or as blind *Bartimæus* said, Oh that my Eyes might be opened, and that my heart might be opened and freed from my corruptions, Oh that Jesus Christ would do this for me, who cannot do it for my self. 515

Because the distressed soul finds the presence of all other things do no whit prejudice a mans everlasting happiness; either the good or comfort of his soul, either the having or encreasing of his Spiritual welfare; the presence of al these outward miseries which may befal, do not hinder either Gods presence, or acceptance of any mans person, a man is never a whit the worse, and the Lord loves him never a whit the less, because his pressures and sorrows encrease upon him; but that is the season of Gods saving health, he is most neer when there is most need, and our misery makes way for the enlargement of his love and mercy to us. *Joseph* is in prison, and God is with him, with his in the fire, that it burn them not, and the Waters that they drown them not; God appears in the mount, *Isa.* 43. 2. God is never seen more graciously and gloriously communicating himself to his Servants, than when they are under the greatest sufferings, *Dan.* 3. 25. when the furnace is seven times hotter, and the three children cast into it, then the Son of God walks visibly with them in the midst thereof. *Blessed are ye when men persecute you, and speak all manner of evil*, then God doth al manner of good, *for great is your reward in Heaven.* So that Reas. 1.

what the Apoſtle enjoyns, the ſinner now finds true by proof, that we have reaſon *to count it all joy when we fall into many temptations*, James, 1, 2, 3, 4. For in al thoſe wants which outwardly befal, they become perfect and intire, and want nothing ſpiritually, and therefore the contrite is content to bear theſe, when he finds they do not hinder the happineſs of the ſoul.

Reaſ. 2. *He now finds, that the preſence of his ſins only poyſons all the Comforts he hath with a curſe*, and cuts off the Hope and Expectation of any bleſſing from the hand of the Lord, in al the Diſpenſations, in the waies of Providences, or Ordinances, towards him, nothing can proſper; *Why tranſgreſs ye the Commandement of the Lord, for ye cannot proſper?* Sin ſtops the paſſage, and puts him beyond al poſſibility of mercy or good ever to be extended towards him; for the Lords determination is paſt, and it's peremptory; there is no peace to the wicked, ſaies my God, *Iſai.* 57. 21. he hath ſaid it, the word is paſt out of his mouth, and no man can reverſe it. You know what a rude Soldier ſaid to the Meſſenger (the thing was ſo reaſonable) What! peace, ſo long as the whoredoms of thy mother *Jezabel* remain, *Joſ.* 7. 12. It's that which the Lord profeſſeth, ſo peremptory; *I will be with you no more, except you deſtroy the execrable thing from among you*: God withholds his bleſſing and preſence, in al the waies of his Providence; for that is the meaning he would not be with them in their Warring, in their going forth, and coming in; he wil not be with them in hearing, in receiving, praying, improving any Ordinance; Word ſhal not work, Prayer profit, Means prevail, Ordinances take place; a man may have them, but no God in them, no Spirit with them, no Bleſſing upon them, no good from them at al. That which poyſons al the comforts we have, and cuts off al Hope and Expectation of ever receiving any good, the deliverance from that muſt be prized as the greateſt good, when it removes the greateſt evil,

evil, nay in truth the evil of al evils with it. 517

He now finds the removal of this, would set open the floodgate of the infinite favor and goodneß of the Lord, to flow in amain upon the soul. Jer. 5. 24. *your iniquities with-hold good things from you*, God doth not with-hold them or keep them from us but onely through the desert of our sins, his arm is not shortned that he cannot help, nor his ear heavy that he cannot hear, he wants not power that he cannot, nor mercy that he wil not help? Its his desire, Oh that there were such a heart in them that they might fear me and keep my commandements that it may go wel with them and theirs for ever *Deut.* 5. 29. Nay he hath taken a sollemn oath, *As I live saith the Lord I desire not the death of a sinner but that he may repent and live Ezek.* 18. 32. so that he wants not mercy but we want hearts, unworthy of the mercy he tenders, & uncapable; Yea unwilling to receive the grace he offers, *Oh every man that wil, let him come and take of the water of life freely Rev.* 22. 17. If you wil take it, God wil give it, and no man wants it, but its certain, its he that wil have it, and its his corruption that keeps him that he receives not, nay is not subject, nay would not be made able to receive this mercy. *Come out of them my people, be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing*; and he offers himself readily, *I wil be their God I wil dwel with them, and walk with them*, he wil constantly assist and comfort them by his presence, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. 19. He wil walk up and down & see their necessities and provide for them answerable to al their needs and desires. That which brings al and the cheifest good to us, yet we should prize as a good. Therfore above al other things we should prize it. 3.

INSTRUCTION, *We here see the reason why the most men in the world prize not Salvation*, breath not after freedom from their sins, *they never saw their sins*, never felt the venom of the disease, never esteemed the presence Use 1.

of

of the Physitian; never looked for liberty, becauſe they were never ſenſible of their thraldom, &c.

Uſe. 2. REPROOF, *A bil of inditement to accuſe and condemn thouſands giving in evidence that they never had the work of God upon their ſouls.* Two ſorts eſpecially.

1. *The ſecure ſinner who is ſo far from ſeeking and coveting deliverance that he wil not take it when its offered,* but is content to be in the priſon of his natural condition and to lye in the boults and fetters of his ſins ſtil. Of this temper were thoſe Jews in captivity that had ſo long lived in *Babilon* they were content to remain there when liberty was proclaimed and the way opened, *deliver thy ſelf O Zion thou that dwelleſt with the daughter of* Babilon *Zach.* 2. 7. yet they ſtayed behind in Captivity ſtil, ſo it is with many a ſluggiſh heart, he is content to periſh rather then do any thing to deliver himſelf, he bleſſeth himſelf in his miſery and ſo is a devoted ſlave to the Devil, as *Exo.* 21. 6. If when the ſervant had his liberty to go out free, *he ſaid plainly I love my Maſter I wil not go out free, then his ear was to be bored with an awl, and he was to be his ſervant for ever,* the boaring of his ear did ſignify his yielding obedience to the Command of another. So when Chriſt comes to ſet a man at liberty, offers mercy and grace and pardon, if a man then ſay, I love my maſter Pride, perverſneſs and Idleneſs, let me have and live in my ſins if God ſay Amen, thou art a bond ſervant of ſin for ever, thou art a miſerable damned creature for ever.

2. *The ſluggiſh profeſſor or hypocrite hat hath had ſome conviction of his ſins and remembrance of the ſtings of his diſtempers, and ſome promiſes and purpoſes of amendment the blow is no ſooner over, but al is at an end,* lazy prayers and feeble endeavours, but when it comes to the poynt he wil do nothing, he wil give you the hearing of counſels and admonitions, you would think the man were in a very good temper, you may wind

wind him about your finger; but in cases of Tryal you shal find him just where he was, he wil do nothing, nay wil do contrary to what he professed to submit unto; he is not thorough and real in his desire and endeavors for deliverance from sin, &c. 519

We are now come to these Things that are plainly expressed in the Words: And here we shal content our selves with Two Collections, which are most plain, and suit best to our present purpose in hand.

They who are truly pierced with Godly sorrow for their sins are willing openly to confess them, when they are called thereunto. Or. *True contrition is accompanied with confession when God calls thereunto.* Doct.

So do these converts here in the place, they come here of their own accord, they do not stay til they be arrested and summoned to the court; but they readily arrest, indite, arraign and accuse themselves before *Peter* and the rest of the Apostles. Men and brethren you have discovered many sins and the dreadful condition of the sinners who are guilty thereof, loe we are the men, thus and thus we have done. By us the Lord Jesus was opposed and pursued, by us he was derided, rayled upon and blasphemed, by us it was that he was murthered, and we are they that have embrewed our hands in his most precious blood: we are they that cryed it and desired it, *Crucified him, away with him, not him, but Barabbas.* Nay they roundly, readily, told al, this in secret we plotted against his life and liberty, thus we consented unto those that should attempt the treason and attachment and encouraged them in their cruelty and trayterous proceeding, we are they that glory ed and rejoyced

joyced in the unrighteous murther of the innocent ſon of God, we applauded our ſelves in that we ſo proſpered in our unjuſt practiſes, Oh ſo would we have it. Men and brecheren we plainly here profeſs it, we openly and nakedly acknowledge it, they are our ſins which you have diſcovered, and we are the ſinners againſt whom you have truly proclaimed the judgments of God our ſins intollerable, and our condition miſerable, we are the men, we are thoſe accurſed, cruel wretches whereof you ſpeak *and what ſhal we do*? Obſerve the like expreſſion in the like eſtate and condition, when al ſorts of people came to the Baptiſts miniſtery, and the Lord was pleaſed to direct him to pierce their hearts by the preaching of the truth; they lay open their ſins and ſores before him and craye ſuccor and relief, as it appears by receits he gives, he applies ſeveral directions according to the ſeveral diſeaſes *Luk.* 3. 12. 13. Then came *the Publicans*, anon *the Souldiers* saying *what ſhal* W E *do*? and he anſwers ſuitably: they made known their maladies and he applyes the cure. As it is in an inward cankerd ſore, if it be lanced throughly and to the quick, it then bleeds kindly and freely: ſo with the ſoul, If the heart feel the ſin really, the tongue wil freely expreſs it, when the ſeaſon ſhal require the point is clear, we wil ſee if we can make it plain.

There be three particulars in the doctrine which deſire explanation.

1. *When a ſinner is called into confeſſion.*
2. *When confeſſion is ſerious and hearty.*
3. *How contrition brings in ſuch a confeſſion*

To the firſt of theſe.

Before I can come to lay forth the ful breadth of the truth I muſt premiſe two things.

That

That sins are of three sorts, as they come to our present consideration, in the case in hand. I.

First some are publick and notorious done in the sight of the sun, open unto the view of al, that are in the place to see it, or come to the hearing of it. Such are practises which are impudent when men are fearless and shameless in their way, *They declare their sin as* Sodom *Isa.* 3. 9. al may see, and they pass not much what they do, so in the case of *Eli's* sons. 1 *Sam.* 2. 17. 23.

Secondly, *Some are private between party and party* to which none are privy but themselves, either the offence don to another. *As* Josephs *mistress when they were alone inticeth him. Gen.* 39. 7. The Adulterous woman meets with the young man, allures, yea tempts him impudently by her loose speech and behavior. Or elss they are Sociates together in the same evil, as of Simeon *and* Levy; *bretheren in iniquity*, Gen. 49. 5.

Thirdly *Some sins are secret when no eyes sees*, no man living apprehends, but a mans heart and conscience, he commits the evil alone, and he alone knows it and God onely who knows the secret of al hearts.

By *open confession*, I understand, the discovery and acknowledgment of the sin to any who knew not of it, before, whether it be publickely to many or privately to some one; because a man is brought thus, to open himself to such, and to make them privy to that which formerly he did not apprehend, these two things thus by way of preparation premised, the answer to the first question wil be referred unto three heads, touching publick, and private and secret sins; in al which particulars there be particular directions to settle a mans judgment, and to order his practices, in a right way. 2.

Touching publick sins, the rule is here; *what ever sins have been publickly committed or being private come to be made publick, of such God requires publick acknowledgment and confession*, two branches here I wil 1.

wil touch both.

If the publick ſcandals and evil which have broke out in our practice to the offence of others, and ſtumbling of the weak, the grief of the good, the encouragement of the wicked, who may be provoked in the like carriages or confirmed in them by reaſon of our example; *then its requiſite and neceſſary, men ſhould take open ſhame by ſollemn acknowledgment.* Its the rule which Chriſt hath left unto the Church, *who ſin openly rebuk openly* 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. and if a rebuk according to the rule of God ought to be diſpenſed, it ought to be received. And that is a main end which on both hands ought to be looked at both in giving and receiving publick cenſure, that the delinquent be aſhamed, and brought to acknowledg his ſin & judg himſelf for it. So *Joſhua* to *Achan* Joſ. 7. 19. *tel me what haſt thou done?* 1 Theſ. 4. 14. *If any man obey not the Goſpel, note ſuch a man,* ſet a brand upon him by a ſad cenſure *that he may be aſhamed* and ſo ſee his evil and come to acknowledgment of it. And hence men ſhould lay ſhame upon him and he anſwerably ought to take it. And when men are out of the Church that the power thereof cannot reach them, the connivence and feebleneſs of humane lawes, wil not ſee execution done upon them; Its commonly the way of providence, that the Lord doth force men to do that out of horror of conſcience which they wil not do out of Conſcience to Gods holy command. Sometimes the Lord arreſts men upon their ſick beds and conſtraineth them to bear the ſhame of that, which they would not be brought to ſee in the dayes of their folly. Then ſend for ſuch and ſuch who have been deeply wronged by me, for ſuch who have been corrupted by my example, The evil counſel that I have given, the loathſom carriages and unſavory language, and ſpeeches that I have expreſſed, thoſe ſubtil inſinuations, and baits that I have layd to entice and entangle them, I deſire now that God would pardon and they forgive: yea ſuch who have been

been ringleaders to their wicked and leud courſes they were not able to abide their perſons and practice, either take him away, or remove me hence ſayes the ſick party thus *they brought their books and burnt them openly in the view of all*, when once God brought their hearts to a through ſight and ſorrow for their ſin *Acts.* 19. 19. Sometimes upon the place of execution God conſtrains me to vomit out their wretchedneſs, to leave ſhame upon themſelves, and to leave their names for a reproach and curſe behind them. and to confeſs now to be condemned, when they would not confeſs in humility to ſeek and receive mercy to be pardoned. Oh beware by my example that you never rebel againſt Parents, reject the counſel and command of Governors, that was my ſin, hath been my bane, and made me ruſh on headily to mine own ruin and confuſion, Nay, 523

Secondly *If the commiſſion of them were private and yet they be made publick by any way in a courſe of providence, ſtil God calls for confeſſion anſwerable, as the ſeaſon ſhal require and opportunity ſuit*, As ſuppoſe a mans ſecret fact come to open view, either by others care, or by the weakneſs of any according to my defect, in al theſe caſes open acknowledgment is requiſite, as for inſtance in the ſeverals, The houſe is broke, the goods ſtoln, conveyed and hid, at length the owner ſees, chalengeth, purſues him in the open court of Juſtice and yet righteouſly; and that which was cunningly carryed before comes now openly to be cenſured again: ſuppoſe that there is an offence given to a brother in Church Covenant and while the caſe is in debate and depending between them two, the party offended againſt the rule of our ſavior, careleſſy and heedleſſy relates this to ſeveral perſons, ſome without, ſome within the Church and they alſo report it heedleſſy to others, ſo that it growes common and the report publick though they of the Church (for the rule of our Savior binds them properly becauſe they have power to reforme or prevent *Matth.* 18. 15. 16. 17.

evil, and doth not in many caſes reach others out of that relation) though they I ſay, did ſinfully and diſorderly make it publick, yet this is ground ſufficient for a gracious heart, and that according to Gods Command, to take the open ſhame of the evil, as ſeeing Gods hand ſo purſuing of him, for purpoſes beſt known to his Majeſty; for the reality and venom of the ſcandal, iſſues properly from his ſin, though the report came occaſionally and diſorderly from others.

Since then the Scandal goes ſo far, and the hurt like to be ſo common by means of his ſin, it's requiſite the ſalve ſhould be as large as the ſore, that the report of the confeſſion for the recovery of the evil, may go as far as the infection hath done by the report of the evil committed. Nay, if through my juſt deſert, it be made publick, when private Counſels take not place, nor admonitions awe, nor reaſons prevail, when no private means that the Lord Jeſus hath appointed, and have been improved, do good, but that they are conſtrained to appeal to the publick; this ſhews the ſtrength of the diſtemper, and the danger of it; and therefore the ſinner needs more deeply to be affected with it, and with greater ſhame and ſorrow to bewail it: As when the Offender wil not hear one, nor yet two or three, that the ſtiffneſs and obſtinacy grows ſo high that the Brethren are conſtrained to call in the help of the whol Congregation, and our Savior is conſtrained to raiſe the whol Army, the Body of the Church, to make head againſt an evil, it argues the corruption grows malignant and deadly, and the condition dangerous and deſperate, and therefore the Confeſſion muſt be ſuitable, muſt lie in ſoak, and be of more than uſual efficacy, or elſe it wil in reaſon be no way ſatisfactory.

2. *Touching private ſins, In caſe of wrong and injury that is done betwixt man and man*; miſcarriages are expreſſed between party and party in the dayly occaſi-

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ons of their lives, in which they are to deal one with another. The Apoſtles Rule is plain and pregnant, without doubt and diſpute, *James*, 5. 16. *Confeſs your ſins one to another, and pray one for another.* In our common converſe, miſcarriages commonly break out and appear, either harſh, unkind, diſcourteous or injurious carriages; men ſhould not ſlight ſuch evils, and ſit down careleſly for the healing or removing of them; but be as careful to apply the Cure as men are heedleſs to avoid the ſin; get a heart conſcientious and ready to confeſs thoſe evils, and that conſtantly, as we are ready to commit and practice them, elſe our prayers and our comforts wil be prejudiced, which by this advice may be quickened and enlarged each for others welfare; for while we commit offences, and not confeſs we ſet our hearts and affections at a diſtance one from another, and therefore we cannot pray ſo affectionately and tenderly as otherwiſe we would, did we ſee the hearts of our Brethren ſo eaſily coming in to the Authority of the Truth, and ſo affectionately carried againſt the ſinful diſtempers of their own ſouls. This is the ground of that ſo ſad a warning, which our Savior ſuggeſts, *Matth.* 5. 23, 24. *When thou goeſt to offer thy Sacrifice, and remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, i, e.* hath any juſt exception againſt any ſinful miſcarriage, *go firſt and be reconciled, and then come and offer.* 525

Touching ſecret ſins, there is the greateſt difficulty, how to diſcern when a party is called of God to make confeſſion thereof. 3.

For Anſwer, there be Three Rules which may ſerve for our right information therein.

If the Lord ſhall (as he hath promiſed in his holy Word) ſeal up the acceptation of our perſons, and the pardon of our ſins, as it ſeems good to his Will, when we ſhall make confeſſion thereof unto himſelf; we then need not, nay in truth we ſhould not make confeſſion of

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our secret sins to man. First, plain it is God *may*, yea many times, nay *most usually* doth evidence the pardon of our sins unto our souls, when we humbly and unfeignedly bewail them unto himself. So the Apostle *John* concludes it as beyond question, 1 *John*, 1. 2 last verse, *If we confess our sins, God is faithful, and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity*; nay, we shal not only have forgiveness granted in Heaven, but evidenced to our hearts on Earth, *Prov.* 28. 13. *He that confesseth and forsaketh, shall find mercy.* If a mans confession be of the right make, not counterfeit, but currant, he shal not only have mercy reserved for him in the Deck, but he shal have the use of it, find the sweet of it, he shal find mercy pardoning, pitying, pacifying, comforting, and saving mercy. As when we have sought the thing that we have in our house, we say we have found it, when we have it in our hand, and for our use. Yea, God is marvelous ready to meet the sinner half way in his mercy and compassions, when he perceives that with a serious purpose of heart he sets himself to this work, *Psal.* 32. 5. *I said* (saith the Prophet) *I wil confess my sin, and thou forgavest mine iniquity.* The unfeigned purpose of Spirit this way, God takes in good part, and is so marvelously pleased therewith, that he gives him pardon, and forgives his sins, before he can mention by his words what he purposed in his mind, 1 *Kings*, 8. 38. *Whatever prayer shall be made by any man that shall know the plague of his heart, he will hear in Heaven, and forgive, &c.*

And in this Case, *we need not*, nay *we should not* make confession of our secret sins; for we have *no Command* to carry us unto this, *no Example* to warrant such a practice, nor yet have we the *Institution of any Ordinance*, which may challenge our attendance to it. And this you must carefully heed, and maintain against that cunning forgery of the Popish confession, which they

they have imposed upon al their followers and drudges. Their Tenet and Opinion is this:

That every man is bound once, at the least before the Sacrament, to confess in particular all and every one of his mortal sins, whereof he stands guilty, into the Ear of the Priests; the memory whereof by due and diligent premeditation, may be had, even such as are hidden, and are against the two last Commands of the Decalogue, together with the Circumstances which may alter the kind of the sin; If not (say they) let him be accursed.

This Canonical Institution, is the erecting of an Engine of Cruelty, to rack mens Consciences, and pick mens Purses to satisfie their own greedy covetous desires; and to set up their Lawless Soveraignty in the hearts of such, who have captivated themselves to their Directions and Counsels: for thus they have a noose upon mens Consciences, and hold men between hopes and fears, leaving them between Heaven and Hell, as they suit their minds. If they please their Humors, then they pardon them, and pull them out of Hell: If they satisfie not their expectations in giving so much for good use, or paying so much yeerly to further the Catholick Cause, then their sins are such, to Hell they must go, they cannot be acquitted: This made their Drudges even weary of their lives, as never seeing an end of their misery, nor knowing what would become of their souls: And it's that which is called by *John* in the Revelations, *The torment of a Scorpion when he stings a man*, Rev. 9 6. *That men shall seek death, and shal not find it; and shal desire to die, and death shal fly from them.* And holy and judicious *Brightman* expounds it of this sting; That the Jesuites keep men upon the rack of this Confession, never knowing what wil be come of their souls, nor an end of their misery, further than it suits their conceits. And the Popish School who were more ingenuous, have delivered in their Judgments, from these unnecessary burdens,

dens which the Jeſuits as hard Task-Maſters, have laid upon other mens Conſciences, and which they wil neither bear nor move the leaſt finger to lend any eaſe.

That which the ſoul hath obtained from Heaven at the hands of God, that is needleſs we ſhould deſire from the hands of men, whoſe only help is to evidence Gods mind. But by humble confeſſion in ſecret to God, the ſoul hath received pardon from Heaven, ſealed up in his boſom by Gods Spirit, and the teſtimony of his own Conſcience; therefore it's needleſs to deſire it from the hands of men, when we have what we deſire, and that in a better manner than they can give it.

Again, *To be wiſe above that which is written, is unlawful*; and to do more than we have warrant for, is ever unacceptable to God: but the Lord in his Word requires no more before the Sacrament, but that a man ſhould examine himſelf, and by the exerciſe of Faith and Repentance, gain aſſurance of the pardon of his ſin, *not go to confeſs his ſecret ſin to another*; therefore to do that, is more than Chriſt and the Goſpel requires, or God wil accept.

Rule. 2. *When the ſoul lies under the guilt of ſecret ſins, if the Lord in the uſe of all other means, denies either* POWER *or* PEACE. *Power to oppoſe and maſter the Corruption*; ſo that ſtil the ſoul is overborn by the violence and malignity of it. *Or denies Peace, ſo that the old guilt returns afreſh, after all prayers and confeſſions we make*, cries and entreaties we put up in fervency and importunity unto the Lord: After the improvement of al means of Reformation and Repentance; yet the Lord, for Reaſons beſt known to himſelf, denies to ſeal up the aſſurance of Love, and the forgiveneſs of ſin unto the Conſcience, then the Lord cals to this Duty of Confeſſion, to ſuch who are fitted and enabled to lend help and relief under God in ſuch a caſe. That which the Lord hath promiſed to beſtow, and we are bound to obtain, we are bound conſequently

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to use al Lawful means appointed by God for this purpose, that we may be made partakers thereof. But the pardon of our sins, the acceptation of our persons, and the peace of our Consciences, God hath promised to bestow, and we are bound to obtain; therefore we must improve al means to this end. If then we find by experience that God is not pleased to dispense power or peace by our own prayers, or improvements of al means by our selves, he then cals us to use the help of the prayers and counsels of others, who are called *the helpers of our Faith and Joy*; who are appointed *to build us up in our holy Faith*: whose duty it is, *to comfort the feeble minded, and to instruct the ignorant*; *and whose prayers are effectual means to obtain the removal of sicknesses, and the forgiveneß of sins.* James, 5. 15.

And some sins there be, *as secret Adultery and murder*, which God never *usually* pardoneth to the heart of the Offender, *but he compels him to lay open those Hellish corruptions by open confession unto some other.* Nay, as he never usually pardons them to his, *commonly he never suffers them to go away conceal'ed even in the wicked*; but when men are not willing to take shame by private confession, he forceth them *by horror of Conscience* to vomit out their filth in the face of the world, and to bear their shame, and leave their names an everlasting reproach when they roar out their wretchedneß upon the gallows, or upon the beds of their sicknesses, before their bodies drop down to the dust, and their souls be dragged by the Devils into Hell.

In case of secret Theft, If the wrong have been done, either fraudulently by some cunning fetches of deceit, or injuriously by stealth to take away the goods of another; *if restitution cannot be made otherwise*, God *then calls*, either to reveal the evil to some other, who is faithful, and may do it; or to the party himself, who may receive the satisfaction. If (I say) restitution cannot otherwise be made; for if it may, then we should never

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Acts, 18. 27. 1 *Thes.* 5. 14.

Observe here

Rule, 3.

never ſpread a Scandal, when we may cover it without prejudice of the Rule, and our Brothers profit. But if reſtitution cannot comfortably and conſcienciouſly be made, without the manifeſtation of the evil, as in many caſes it cannot, then God calls for the uſe of this means to attain this end.

II. 2. *When is this Confeſſion ſerious and hearty?*

It may be diſcerned when Confeſſion comes to be ſerious and hearty, if it have these qualifications, and is made up of the Ingredients following, it's then of the right make, and compoſition according to the courſe of the Sanctuary.

1. *It muſt be free:* It comes off a hand cleverly, flows naturally and ingeniouſly from a contrite ſinner; the ſoul that is truly burdened doth not by a weariſh kind of unwillingneſs withdraw from the duty, or make a retreat from the diſcovery of the Truth, as Soldiers uſe to do, when the Service is unwelcom; but the paſſage is cleer, and their Spirits ſet for the buſineſs, and therefore proceed on without any miſgiving of heart: *And this appears thus in the manner of their carriage, in the mannaging this occaſion in three Things.*

1. *They are eaſie to yield to whatever well-grounded evidence is brought in againſt them, to ſtoop to any arguments of weight, to fall before the ſtrength of Reaſon that ſhal be rendred, to lay forth their guilt, and the loathſomneſs of their evil, yea, they are glad of that light.* And therefore if men for want of the right underſtanding of the ſeveral and particular Circumſtances of a practice, cannot ſo fully give in Evidence of the evil, becauſe it was hid from them in ſome paſſages, or elſe for want of conſideration, did not purſue it ſo narrowly as they might and ought, but that there is ſcope and room

room left for a Cavil: A diſtreſſed Convert wil not take the advantage of mens ignorance, miſtakes, or miſapprehenſions, to make an eſcape from the evidence of Truth, which the Conſcience tels that it deeply concerns him; or eſpies on every ſide to find a muſe by the miſtaking of a word, to put off an apparent teſtimony of that which his heart knows he is faulty in, and that which the party fully intended. But he anſwers to the ſcope of the Queſtion, Evidence or Accuſation, and that which he knows to be ſuitable to the Nature and ſubſtance of the Charge, and that which toucheth his miſcarriage, and that in the aim of the Speaker; he ſees the parties aim, and is privy to his own guilt; and he owns the thing, and yields the Conviction: this you would, though your words do not reach it, and this is true, and this was my practice, and is my ſin, without either cavilling or excuſing, or mincing the matter; this is the guize of the ſinner that is heart-ſick of ſin: but he that is Sermon-ſick, or ſhame-ſick, &c. he ſtands upon his fence, lies at catch for words, ſpies out any advantage in the manner of the expreſſion, if there be but the leaſt ſyllable of a circumſtance, either too much or too little, and if there be but a crevis he creeps out at it, and conceits and concludes he is ſafe. No man ever heard me ſay ſo; no man can prove that I ever ſaid thoſe words: It's replied, No, did I? Here are ſuch and ſuch that are able to witneſs it from your own mouth; and when teſtimony is produced, and they conſtrained to yield, they ſpake indeed ſo and ſo, but ſuch and ſuch was not their expreſſion: in the mean time, the ſence is al one, and the ſcope of the ſpeech they wel perceived, carried nothing but the reallity of the matter with it. What a wretched kind of fallneſs, and fooliſh wilineſs of ſpirit is this, to prejudice the paſſage and power of the Truth, mine own conviction, and peace, by a wilful and ſilly miſtake of a word? And thus theſe counterfeits deal with their ſins; as ſomtimes ſuch as be confederate

with Traitors, deal with the search and enquiry after them; instead of helping others to seek and find them, they by their wilines lead aside the Officers, and make them over-look the secret conveyances which are most suspicious, and most likely to receive them; which shews they are of the pack of the Conspiracy, and intend rather to hide the Rebels, than to pursue and attach them: The sinner truly distressed, is of another temper; in an easie kind of plainness laies open his heart to any beam of light, that may discover his evil without any shifting and doubling. He is suspicious of the evil of his own spirit, and as willing to see them as any man besides, because they more hazard his wel-fare, and therefore he is willing to welcome any light that any one brings him to that end; *Nathans* Accusation, and *Davids* Confession, are as the Voyce, and the Eccho, *I have sinned against the Lord*, 2 Sam. 12. 13. he needed not to bring in the great Inquest for the Tryal: So it was with *Judah*, when *Thamar* his Daughter was found to play the Harlot, and was now brought to her examination, and so to her punishment, she sends the Message to her Father in Law; By the man whose these are, am I with Child: And she said, discern I pray thee whose these are, the Signet, the Bracelet, and the Staff: Mark his return, how easily he yields, would not so much as traverse the cause, or cal for a proof, when the thing was plain without any brabling or cavilling, confesseth the thing, ceaseth any further suit, no not a debate; *Judah* acknowledged, and said, *She is more righteous than I*, *Gen.* 38. 25. In the things that are doubtful, it's usual, and no more but what Conscience and Command requires, to debate to see the Truth; but when the fault and offence is plain, then to maintain debates and cavils, is indeed to devise waies how to darken the discovery of the Truth by confused quarrelling, to make an escape out of a fault, as a Malefactor to convey himself away in a crowd: Thus false-hearted *Saul*, when he pretended the

the accomplishment of Gods wil and the execution of the work about which he was sent; *Come thou blessed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord,* to whom *Samuel, what meaneth the bleating of sheep, and lowing of the oxen &c.* 1. Sam. 15. 14. 15. one would have thought there had been so much convicting evidence, as would have stopped the mouth and sunk the heart of the man under the guilt of so gross a falshood. Yet he wil not yield, he brings about the business afresh, *the people spared the best of the sheep, and the oxen for sacrifice, and the rest we have killed,* I construed the command so, and took your meaning to be that, namely sacrifice must ever be attended, and then al the rest must be cut off. How is it possible that common sence could put such a conceiving upon *so plain* a charge, *go kil al &c.* that is, *spare many?* yet a wily heart must have some way to raise a cavil, he comes heavily off to confession.

As a contrite sinner is easy to yield the evil by way of conviction, *so ready to expres it by open satisfactory acknowledgment, upon any occasion according to the nature of the offence; he is so far from being troubled to do this that he is troubled and restless in himself until it be done;* and therefore if there be an opportunity to invite him, he takes it without stay; if a wanting, he longs for it, and desires it, nay if none wil provoke him he is studious to seek an occasion, and to press in upon some opportunity, that if it be a publick evil he may publish his acknowledgment: if a wrong he desires not until another comes or sends, but he sends, he goes to him to bewaile it. If a secret he wil not stay to be asked or have his confession wrested from him, by force of reason, and overbearing argument, but is more ready to tel al, than another is willing to hear, not give a man to gues at some wickedness by some intimation, but paints out al in a most loathsome discovery to make his evil appear most detestable. A soul in a right disposition

2.

poſition of brokenneſs of ſpirit, is like a body in a right temper and conſtitution, if it be prickt in a vein there is more trouble to ſtay and ſtanch the bleeding than to provoke it for to bleed. So here. And hence though there was no horror of Conſcience to conſtrain, no authority to require, no counſel to perſwade he could not ſatisfy his own heart, he could not be quiet before he had ſatisfyed the rule, and proceeded in open hoſtile manner againſt his ſin; but a falſe heart after conviction which was attayned with great difficulty; he muſt be drawn like a Bear to a ſtake to make open confeſſion as the cauſe may require; and when he comes by conſtraint, Conſcience dragges him, or Authority compells him thereunto. His ackowledgment ſticks in his teeth, he liſpes them out ſo weariſhly, hacks and hewes, ſtops here and ſtops there, as though he would ſay ſomthing becauſe he muſt ſpeak; and yet is afraid he ſhal ſay more then he would: therefore bites in his words one way, ſometimes turnes his ſpeech another way, if any ſpeech ſeems too open, or to give too much advantage to the truth, he reeals himſelf and begins to qualify what he hath ſaid, he would not be miſtaken, he meant thus and thus, *i. e.* his meaning is to conceal as much as he can.

And hence a man muſt propound ſo many interrogatories, aske ſo many queſtions, inquire interpretations of what a man hath ſaid when he hath ſaid what he wil, as though a man ſhould pul a confeſſion from a man, as an untimely birth, which he were not freely willing to bring into the world, and when he hath gotten what he can, he can hardly make any thing of what confeſſion he hath made; But a heart that is burdened to purpoſe, pricked to the quick and parted from his ſins, his expreſſions come off kindly and iſſue naturally from him, not in a ſqueaked, quaint kind of ſtrayn as though he would coyn a confeſſion, but with that freedom and redineſs as though his ſpirit was naturalized into ſuch expreſſions; his heart was ſevered from his corruption, the

the passage is plain, and he would banish them by an open confession, and therefore watchfully takes the occasion that may suit the work; *Acts*, 19. 19. they that used unlawful and curious arts, they brought their books and burned them in the sight of al, they were not summoned to this service by authority, they came of their own accord &c. And this was ordinary with *Paul* to take advantage by the solemnity of the place and people, to publish his sin and shame, and to bewail it in the view of the world, no man either desireing or expecting any such thing, and he freely unbosomed his heart and said more against himself than al the world could say, the whol narration you may read, *Acts*, 26. 9. *I utterly thought I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus, which thing I also did, shutting up the prison, compelling them to blaspheme and being exceeding mad against them, &c.*

The Physitian observes it in humors of the stomach, & the Chirurgion in felons & sores which breed from the meeting of noysom humors, there must be a separation before evacuation, nature intends a severing before a purging; he that pricks the sore before it be ripe, he hinders the cure, and increaseth the danger of the disease, the corrupt matter wil not issue, nor yet any ease to the patient; but when the sore is ripe & the corruption rotten & now severed from the part it wil run amain and be removed at once, look say we, the very core comes out so it is with the soul and sin, when its loosened with Godly sorrow even at the root, and the heart is now divorced from it, the sinner bleeds kindly and confession comes on with much ease, you need not hale a man to acknowledgment nor wring a confession from him, he wil prevent you with plain and open dealing, if you wil but permit him to speak; this is one part of the meaning of that phrase, *to pour out our hearts like water*, Lam. 2. 19. give it but vent, make but way for the passage of the water, it runns naturally of it self, there needs no constraint

constraint, and the passage once made it runs, without any stay; but if you pour out tar out of a barrel, some may issue out, but you must by scraping and raking pul out the rest, this is the difference between a heart truly burdened and an hypocrite perplexed with horror; the contrite soul poures out his complaints into a mans bosom without any stay, the soul hath ful vent; but with the hypocrite you must take out his confession, by force of reason; As the difference between water in the channel and in the pumpe; the stream runs currently, kindly, readily, you must force it to stay, but the other you; must force it to run; a man must pump and press out a confession by power of argument, or else there is no water to be gotten to purpose.

3. *He takes the evil to himself and doth not lay it upon another, and is carryed with greatest vehemency against that in the sin that was most vile, and that he wil not mince*; he is farr from laying blame upon another, to aggravate other mens evils, when he comes to acknowledg his own, as conceiving the more loathsom they appear, his may appear less; Nay, now is the time wholly to attend his own, and especially to bewail that most whereby he hath most offended. When the potion or vomit works upon the humor mainly, then it works kindly. So Judah *Gen.* 38. 26. *She is more righteous than I*, and they 1 *Sam.* 12, 19. *we have added unto al our other sins this evil.*

2. *As it must be free so it must be ful*: it comes from the bottom & brings out al before it; he doth not content himself to maintain the practice or carriage that was scandalous and wicked, but layes open & bewailes especially the bitter root of those base distempers, out of which those evils were brooded and brought forth; they are the cause of al, and worse than al together with those by ends and base respects, and those crooked aymes that have carryed the soul aside from the righteous wayes of the Lord, what ever aggravating circumstances hath any weight in the

the apprehension of the soul, it sets forth al; the scandal wil apparently argue these, and a wise discerning christian wil perceive al these in their working, and a sincere heart desires to take most shame for these, and therefore is ful in the confession, so *David* goes to the root of those hainous miscarriages, even original sin, and his accursed contrivements to give content to his lusts, and therefore he complaines of that, *Psal.* 51. 3. 4. *thou lovest truth in the inward parts*, and the truth I have despised and opposed; This is to be attended as another thing in the comparison, to pour out the heart like water in acknowledgments, there is nothing that remains behind, as there is in oyl and those kind of things that be of a more tenacious disposition. This was eminent in the acknowledgment of the holy Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. *I was a blasphemer, a persecuter, and injurious, but I did it ignorantly through unbelief*, not to lessen his evil, but that he might look to the bottom of it. A true contrite sinner deals with these hid treasures of evil, as *Ezechiah* did with the treasures of his house to the Babylonish Ambassadours, *Isa.* 39. 4. *then said Isaiah, what have they seen? he answered, al that is in my house, there is nothing in al my treasures that I have not shewed them*; so it is with a simple hearted convert, he wil turn the inside of his heart outward, there wil be nothing amongst the hid treasures of iniquity, when he is called to confession, that he wil not nakedly present to God and the world, and that without stickage, without demurs and murmurings, he wil not cut off his expressions by halfes as though his heart misgave him, for what he had done, but sets open the floodgate to the ful, that he may leave nothing behind that he may fully and plainly see the bottom; he is ready to unravel the whol frame of wickedness, as it were wrought in his heart, that so he might dissolve, analyse and undo the web and work of Satan, and therefore he wil tel you, my course you know, and the world

knowes, it hath been scandalous my carriage loathsom, Oh but my heart in that sin was worse than my carriage, the pride and malice, perverseness and covetousness of mine own heart carried me by main force against many checks of my Conscience and inward misguidings to that practice to serve mine own distempered lusts, and when it was done, and discerned to be scandalous, the invincible stubbornness of mine own heart would not suffer me to stoop to the evidence of the truth, but I set carnal reason on work, that since I could not deny it were done, yet I might put color, construction, some meaning and interpretation upon it, that it might appear to be done lawfully, at the utmost that it was onely a mistake and out of ignorance, which the most able and exact is incident unto. And al this was with reluctance and against mine own light: therefore if I found any that were easy and favorable and were ready to be carryed away with some colourable appearances, to those I often repayred, to them I complained and professed my simplicity, and yet willingness to see, that so I might screw my self into their affections to pity me, and so to be unwilling to hear any thing against my person or cause and certainly the man speaks honestly and means plainly, I wish there may be no prejudice and then sat I in counsel with my own corrupt heart, and mind, how to carry the frame of the business in the fayrest pretence; I plotted how I might make an escape, and wind away from such evidences and expressions which pinched most narrowly, and there I would put in some word, or else pretend they were spoken to some other end, or start up some new occasion to draw the discourse another way, and to another thing, and made them loose the pursuit of that which indeed pinched, and thus I committed many evils in the defending of one, and broke many rules under pretence of making up one breach; but from these wretched grounds, to these wicked ends in this disorderly manner by a plotted kind of

of studied villany, I have wronged God, the truth, my profession, my brethren, mine own soul, this is my wretched disposition I would see and say the worst of it &c. this is as I said to unravel the clew of a wretched course that he may see the end and utmost of it. So to lance the sore that the core may come out from the bottom, and then the cure wil undoubtedly follow, which cannot be so attayned, as long as it continues.

Sometimes persons that want bouldness, and ability, cannot so fully open themselves in publick alwayes; yet the frame of their spirits and expressions wil ever aym at such a thing, to the apprehension of such as have any spiritual eye salve about them because their confessions are ever minted out of their own hearts, and the loathsomness of such evils wherewith they are and have been loaded. But for a man that comes to confess his evil, to forget the main evil he came to confess, is such a heavy hand of God, to discover a counterfeit confession, that it would make a moral man that had but understanding about him sit down confounded, under the dreadful curse of Gods displeasure, and the right consideration of the rottenness of his heart.

Observe here

And this is the second ingredient into a serious confession, it must be ful, the whol compas is contained within these two particulars that I may sum up that shortly which hath been largely spoken. 1. Ful in regard of relation of the things, *My son sayes* Joshua *give Glory to God, and tel me what thou hast done, hide nothing from me*, Jos. 7. 19. 2. Ful in regard of opposition of the heart, the tongue fully relates al the heart, fully opposeth al, sets it self wholly to drag al to the place of judgment and see execution done upon al; As it were said in the law and enjoyned to him that should discover *a brother or a friend that inticed to Idolatry, his eye should not pity, nor his hand spare, but he should fling the first stone at him*, so here in confession we should bring out al our distempers, yet they may receive the sen-

tence of Condemnation; neither should I pity, nor your hearts spare, but see execution upon them, that I may take away evil; to confess, is to speak as God doth, to speak together with him, to see sin, to sentence sin as the Lord doth. To make a ful relation of a sin, and yet the heart to maintain a reserved device how to contrive some colorable pretence, by some Caution and Interpretation to entertain it, it is Hellish Hypocrisie. As the Adulterer brabbles with her Mate before her Husband, that so she may meet with him without the suspicion of her Husband. So the Hypocrite he wil readily without any hunching, acknowledg his sin and error in one sence, that so as occasions serves, he may plead for it, and only pretend another sence.

3. *The Confession is then serious, when it is leaves the soul base, and makes the sinner put his mouth in the dust*; looks at himself as vile, loaths his sin, and himself for it, and is desirous that the evil, and he for it, may be loathed of al that have heard and known it, willing that both himself and sin, should by al, for ever be dishonored, who have dishonored God; *Dan.* 9. 8. *Unto us belongs shame and confusion of face*, for ever to be opposed and rejected, who have rejected his Truth, that the hearts of all should be estranged from it, and from that frame of Spirit which acted him, because they have estranged him and others from God: he would shame himself, and therefore is content others should cast shame upon him, *Ezek.* 36. 31, 32. *Then they shal loath themselves for all their abominations which they have committed*: Lam. 3. 29, 30. *He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath born it upon him; he puts his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope.*

4. *The Soul by this serious Confession, intends to take an* ADVANTAGE *against his sin*, and so much more engages his heart, by the Witnes of God, and Men, and Angels, to keep himself for ever from al occasions and provocations thereunto, and holds his heart in a holy

ly bent of abasedness for ever, not once to admit any consideration or pretence of any carnal Reason, that may seem to leave the least inticement that way; when temptations come, and corruptions stir as formerly, this stops him, I have confessed these sins before al, and they are condemned by al, therefore I wil not, I dare not give way; Ezek. 16 last, *That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame.*

3. *How doth Contrition bring in this Confession, and enlarge the Heart this way?*

I Answer upon Three Grounds; all which are so many Arguments of the Point propounded

Taken from that bitterness which the soul in this contrite disposition, hath tasted, and that undeniably to be in those distempers in which it hath taken so much content in former time; the poysoned loathsomness which now it hath felt experimentally to be in such pleasing lusts, and which formerly have been the delight and diet of the soul: And therefore it is the heart of the sinner is not able to brook or bear them, but vomits them out with vehement distast, and unsufferable disdain, abandons them by open confession. In the Body we see it, the Stomach when it was clogged with abundance of gross and foul Humors, as in the disease called *Pica*, it wil feed upon coals and ashes, and loom wall will down as desirable diet, because such noysom diet suits best with those noysom Humors which abound in the Stomach, but when it's recovered and brought to any wholsom constitution, if it meet with any such provision which is now loathsom and cross unto it, it's presently sick, and cannot be eased before it cast it out. It's so with I.

with the sinner when once he hath attained this wholsom constitution, and disposition of a contrite spirit. Those noysom abominations which seemed so sweet and savory to his sensual and base heart, that it could digest them as its only diet and delight; corrupt lusts were most suitable to corrupt nature, and no marvel that the Toad and Spiders lick up poyson which is so agreeable to their poysonful Nature; but when the Lord hath wrought this through contrition, as a wholsom disposition and constitution of soul, so that not only the punishment of it which is tedious, but the poyson and filth becomes more deteastable and grievous to the sinner, the heart is not able to suffer the loathsom bitterness thereof, but forthwith endeavors to cashier it utterly by acknowledgment, and confession, that the very scent and savor, yea, the least remembrance of it may be for ever removed. Pain wil make the dog vomit out his meat, sence of punishment constrain'd *Judas* to cast out his morsel, fling away his money, the bribe of the bloody Treachery and Treason of his; but had they been both poysoned, the one with his meat, the other with the venom of his sin, it would have wrought more freely and fully in both; That Godly Sorrow which was wrought in the hearts of the Corinthians, who bore with the incestuous person a long while, and the incestuous person himself who committed the evil 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. *It wrought a cleering* in the one, as the Text expresseth it, and no question in the other upon the same ground, *i. e.* a naked, full, and free-hearted acknowledgment; Godly Sorrow, like a strong Potion, cleers the Stomach, casts out the core, suffers no remainders behind, of any secret reservation of a wretched distemper, in any degree or circumstance, makes a cleer Conscience quit of any combination, with any lust in the least correspondence. When the corruption which is gathered in the festered sore, grows ripe and rotten, it wil break presently, though no man lance or touch it, and runs plentifully

and

and abundantly. So with this through contrition, it works a ſeparation, and therefore an evacuation, looſens the affection from the ſin inwardly, and abandons it wholly by acknowledgment. 543

It's true, In Nature, and Grace, and Reaſon, each thing preſerves it ſelf, and therefore expels its contrary, to the utmoſt diſtance it may, that it may neither find nor fear any annoyance, or hazard therefrom; and therefore we find in diſeaſes, Agues and Feavers, when Nature by the help of Phyſick hath gained ſome ſtrength, forceth the malignant humor as far from the heart as it can, it breaks forth into the lips, and then it's conceived and concluded, the fits wil end, the danger is over. So it is with the ſoul when it's helped by the Spirit in piercing the ſoul with Godly Sorrow, he cauſeth the diſeaſe and diſtemper to break forth into the lips by open confeſſion, and forceth it as far as may be, from ever annoying the heart any more. The ſweetneſs of ſin is in this taken off, contrition ſevers it from the heart, confeſſion vomits out and removes it, that it may never annoy the ſoul, or diſturb the peace of a mans Conſcience any more.

2. *The diſtreſſed ſinner now comes really to feel, and ſo to know the danger of ſin, as undoubtedly hazarding a mans everlaſting happineſs and welfare,* and to find alſo by woful proof his own weakneſs, and inability either to prevent it or bear it, or remove it and help himſelf againſt that eternal ruin and confuſion which God hath threatened, and he muſt expect, and ſhal endure by reaſon of the ſame. He thought indeed in the time of his folly, That Preachers in point of policy, preſenting ſin in a more dreadful viſage and appearance, than there was juſt cauſe, or Reaſon would in truth conclude; at leaſt he imagined (if the worſt befel) that either he would remove the guilt, or avoid the plague, or ſubdue the ſtrength of ſuch diſtempers that did threaten Gods diſpleaſure, and his deſtruction: but now he finds it otherwiſe,

therwise, yea his own Conscience, nay his own sence and experience doth abundantly confute his folly and mistakes, that notwithstanding al the waies he can take, and means he can use, guilt stil continues, he cannot remove it, plagues he cannot avoid, violence and venom of his corruption he cannot master, nor help himself against the Soveraign Command and Authority, they yet live, and are mighty: And therefore he is forced to send up to Heaven dayly, yea to seek out unto the faithful Servants of the Lord, that they may lend a helping hand for his relief that may help him by their prayers when he sees his own prevail not, guide him by their Counsel, when through his own ignorance he is at a loss in his thoughts, and cannot direct himself, that they may tent and heal his sore, when out of unskilfulness he cannot tel how to dress the wounds of his own diseased and distressed spirit: Thus Nature doth not only teach men, but necessity compels al when they find themselves helpless to call, yea, cry for help, yea, to send far and neer for succor unto such in whose power it is to support; when men have used al Kitchin Physick, and taken some Ancient Receipts they have by them, and yet the disease grows desperate, and the cure more difficult, they presently speed out to those who are able and learned Physitians for Counsel and Cure. He that fears an on-set, he would have a Second in the field with him: So here. *God hath given the tongue of the Learned to some to speak a word in season to a weary Conscience*, Isai. 50. 4. To others God hath given a dexterous hand to joynt the souls and comforts of such, who by some dangerous fall, and sudden surprizal of distempers have made a breach in their spirits and peace, *Gal.* 6. 1. *You that are spiritual, joynt such a man with a spirit of meekness*, handle him skilfully, yea gently and tenderly: To some again God hath given precious Receipts, rare experiences of his peculiar mercies, to their own souls, which few have heard, almost none besides themselves have had the

the like proof, 2 *Cor.* 4. 1. 4. Paul *was afflicted and comforted, that he might relieve and comfort others in afflictions*: 2 Cor. 2. 11. he professeth he was *not ignorant of Satans Methods*, but was wel acquainted with his Stratagems, having been in so many pitcht fields, so many Sieges. Hence it is that these poor wounded sinners in the Text, press in upon the Apostles as skilful and experienced Physitians for such as were in spiritual distress, *Men and Brethren what shall we do?* q. d. You understand we are ignorant, and know not what way to take; you are experienced, and we unacquainted wholly with Gods dealings and directions, and perceive not what to do. Besides, were mens abilities equal, yet many eyes see more, and many hands can do more than one; as in some wounds which we cannot reach by our own hands, another though weak and unskilful, wil lend ready help, wil search and tent the wound we cannot touch nor reach; the meanest Christian hath more Experience in some Case than those who are far more able, and thou canst not reach it, nor come at it, he will search it with ease.

3. *A Contrite sinner is willing to take shame, and therefore willing to open himself and sin, that he may bear shame that is due unto him for it.* He sees now the vileness of sin, and himself vile because of it, and therefore looks at shame as his due desert, which he hath merited at the hands of God and man, and therefore accounts it but reasonable that he should be dishonored and rejected of others, who hath dishonored the great Name of God, and cast shame and contempt upon the good waies of his Grace; he sits down really convinced of his own baseness, and therefore doth not complement and speak words of course against himself; he wil say, I am so and so vile, and wretched, and doth not condemn himself that others might acquit him, not reproach his person and practice that others might praise and pity him. But as it was said of them, *They should wash themselves,*

Observe here

and judg themselves worthy to be cut off, and condemned, and therefore worthy to be despised and trampled upon as unsavory salt; and hence he is willing out of a holy indignation to shame himself, and the sinfulness of his heart and life, which hath been a shame to his profession, and cast shame upon the righteous and holy waies of the Lord.

That which takes away all the hindrances of this holy duty of Confession, and puts the soul upon the necessity of the performance, that must needs fit the soul for the discharge of this Service. But Contrition takes away the hindrances, which are these three: Either a man would not have his sin removed and subdued: Or else he need not help to that purpose: Or else he is afraid and ashamed to take help, which is provided in that behalf.

But this Work of Contrition makes a man willing to be helped against his sin, makes him see a need, and seek for help; makes him willing to take shame, and he sees a necessity he should, that he may receive help against his sins. Therefore Contrition fits and enables the soul to a right Confession of sin.

Use 1. INSTRUCTION. *We here see the reason of those sinful windings and turnings of Devices, which generally appear in mens practices after the commissions of evil, when they should be brought to a naked acknowledgment of their errors herein*: So many muses to escape, so many sleepy, senceless shifts to save their own stake, their credit and respect, yield nothing, though they can gainsay nothing with color of Reason, they spend their wits and thoughts, and lay about them to the utmost skil of al the carnal reason they have, to latch the blow, to defeat and put by the stroak of the Truth, the dint and evidence of the Argument that would discover their evil. In a word; here is the root and reason of those turnings aside from the Authority of the Truth,

They

They never came where this Contrition of heart grew, nor yet indeed knew what it meaneth; they never saw sin aright, their souls were never sensibly affected with the direfulness of the scandal they give unto others, and the guilt they bring upon their own Consciences; for all which they must one day answer. It's said, *Luke*, 3. 6, 7. that when God prepares way for the coming of the Lord Jesus, or the coming of it within the sight and ken of Salvation, That *crooked things must be made straight, before any flesh can see the salvation of the Lord.* There be crookings of carnal reason in the heart of every man naturally; it was the great Ingredient into the first sin of *Adam*, and hath been his Curse ever since, *to find out findings*, Eccles. 7. last, to invent inventions, to make an escape from the Truth, and so to walk in the vanity of their own mind; and unless the Lord heat a man in the fire of his fury, hold him upon the Anvil, beat him, and break him by the hammer of the Law, in this work of Contrition, this crookedness wil never be removed, nor he come within the sight of Salvation, and it's made one part of the description of a man that is out of the path of peace, *Isay*, 59. 8. *They have made their waies crooked.*

By way of REPROOF, *It dasheth that dream of the wicked, and cursed imagination of carnal men who conceit, that to fal under the foot of contempt according to the desert of our evil doings, they conceive it a point of greatest disparagement and wickedness that can be imagined, and to take up a mans abode in that abased condition*, either by some reach of policy not to prevent such an evil; or when it doth befal, to be shiftless, as to sink under it, and not to be able to struggle out, they look at such, and leave it upon Record in their Observation, as very simplicians, such as are destitute either of wit or courage, to swallow down such indignities, and never be sick of them, these persons they note as feeble, and the practice base. A hellish delusion, directly contrary

Use 2.

trary to the truth here delivered, and the practice of these Converts, now truly broken-hearted with Godly sorrow for their sins, That which issues from the power and work of Gods Spirit upon the soul, it argues neither feebleness nor baseness, and such is this practice, and therefore it argues neither.

1. *Not feebleness*, because it is of a conquering, of a commanding power, and that against the greatest forces of sin and Satan, which they bring into the field, our own carnal ends, and high conceited excellency of our worth, the seeking our selves, and setting up our own persons, and names, and praises, are the very stumps of Dagon, which stand longest, the very heart blood of the body of death; the high and overweening thoughts of the Soveraignty of our wils, and worth, they are the holds of Satan: to batter down the strong holds, and to make us lie down in the dust, and to be abased in the sight of God and man in quiet subjection, is indeed to subdue the power of darkness, a work unto which we must be enabled by the power of the Almighty, far beyond the might of al Creatures, much less that feebleness be able ever to compass it; if thou conceitest it is so easie, go thy waies, and do thou likewise: Alas poor deluded Creature, it's such a task that thy heart misgives thee at the very on-set, and thou art never able to turn thy hand to it: thou must have allowance from thy lusts, and stubbornness of thy own heart, and ask leave of thy pride and vain glory; and when al is done, thou canst not so much as faign a confession, such a slave and underling thou art to thy sinful distempers, even slavery it self, that they wil not suffer thee to speak a word to cross thine own wayward spirit, and condemn the wretchedness of thy carnal carriage; which by the power of the spirit of contrition, these poor Servants of the Lord can do; not verbally, but really and seriously, as in the sight of God. Which shews there is more than the strength of a mans self that must loath,

loath, yea destroy a mans self; that is his self pride and praise. 549

2. As there is no feebleness in this, *so neither is there the least baseneß in so blessed a service, and work of such excellency as this is*, a behavior truly honorable and such as indeed beseems persons of the greatest account with God and man: It were the diamond in *Solomons* Crown, *Eccles.* 1. 1. *The words of a soul gathered to his people, the son of David, King in Jerusalem*, they were titles of honor but this was the top of al. It was a higher soveraignty, to bewail his sin, and seek unfeyned reconciliation to the Church, and by serious and thorough satisfaction, to obtayn acceptance, than to sit in the throne of *Israel*; by that he was above his subjects, by this he was above himself; by that he had power over his people; by this he prevayled over the power of darkness, hel & devils & distempers; by that he was above the Kingdom & ruled it according to his own wil, by this he is above his wil, which was above the King, yea above his corruption, and lusts who lorded over wil, and King, and Kingdom, and al. Yea this is so eminent a service however it seems other to the deluded minds of men, it makes way for the higheſt pitch of al that happiness we ever hope to obtayn, here on earth or hereafter in heaven; 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. the pinacle of al perfection unto which we can be advanced, *is that God may be al in all*, now when a sinner lyes under the sort of loathsomness, hath nothing, doth nothing, receives nothing professeth himself unworthy to be looked at, worthy to be loathed of heaven & earth; *Now God is al in al* not onely doth al for him such is his nothingness in himself, but here is the glory of al power & wisdom and mercy to overcom his unworthyness- and to make him fit to receive any thing; besides, look at the very work it self, that is the greatest victory, and those must be the greatest conquerors of al, who have conquered and made a poyl of al the Glory of the world. The heathen King

King wished there were more worlds to conquer, he that is willing to bewail his sins and take shame for them, he hath conquered al those worlds and the conqueror himself, and those high thoughts that conquered him; its a degree above glory willingly to be content to want it, than indeed to enjoy it.

Use 3. *Ground of* EXAMINATION *and* TRIAL: If we would ever gain assurance or bring in evidence and proof to oure own souls and others, that indeed our hearts have been broken for our sins and so turned from our sins in a saving manner unto God here in the kingdom of Grace, that we may undoubtedly assure our selves that we shal see his face in glory in another world; *try thy heart and condition by the former truth lay thy soul level to the doctrine formerly delivered; if thou findest this work of God, thou mayest undoubtedly conclude there is the spirit of God.* And however it seems so mean in the eyes of men, yet the greater the power of the Almighty is seen in it, to lay mountains low and level; the hand of the Lord must do this; As the Magicians in Egipt professed touching the lice, that wonder which the Lord then expressed though it were in a thing very little and despicable to the eye, yet they confessed, *this the is finger of God,* they were not able to turn their hand to that work. So dost thou upon through search find this disposition of spirit, that thou dost see that infinite loathsomness in thy corruptions, and in thy heart being taynted therewith; so noysom the plague sore of sin, and thy soul and self, so defiled with running provocations thereof, that in truth thou art loath to see thy heart, to own it or to have it, which hath nothing but loathsomness in it, and conceivest thou art worthy indeed others should judg so of thee, as thou judgest of thy self; how ever this frame of spirit may seem mervailous mean and despicable in the eye of the world, know thou mayest and conclude thou shouldst, this is the very finger of God; flesh and blood hath not revealed

Exod. 8. 19.

vealed this hath not wrought this in thee, but the ſpirit which is from God. That which is at ods with al the excellency that is fleſh and blood, that which is oppoſite to it and tramples upon the glory and pride of it, that muſt needs be more than fleſh and blood, Ezek. 16. 2. *laſt. I wil eſtabliſh my covenant, and thou ſhal know I am the Lord*, thou ſhalt know me, and own me, and beleeve in me, as thy God and thy Lord, *then thou ſhalt remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame*; When God ſets open the fountain of his free grace in the ſoul, theſe ſtreams wil follow. 551

Hence then this doctrine brings in a heavy inditement againſt ſundry ſorts of men, and gives undeniable evidence that as yet they never knew what it was to be broken-hearted for ſin, or turned ſavingly from ſin, the ſtupid ſenceleſſneſs of whoſe ſpirits is wholly uncapable of this holy bluſh, and confuſion of face and heart.

Firſt of thoſe who through the hardneſs of their hearts by their conſtant cuſtome and continuance in their ſin are beyond the ſence of it or ſhame for it; whoſe faces are ſettled, and their conſciences ſeared with a hot iron, ſo that there is no ſting at al or check that ſtirrs them, but as a ſeared part is without ſence or feeling, they practice their wretchedneſs, and profeſs it, are convinced of it and go away not touched, nor troubled with it, ſhrink not retire not with any ſence of fear or ſhame, for what they have done; ſuch are never like to ſee the filth of their ſins, before they ſee them by the flames of the fierceneſs of Gods wrath in the fire of hell, of this heliſh temper were thoſe forlorn creatures *Jer.* 8. 6. *I hearkend and heard but no man repented him ſaying what have I done?* they take not their ſins into conſideration, nor attend the danger but *every man turned to his own courſe as the horſe ruſheth into the battle*, nothing ſtops them or affrights them, v. 12. *were they aſhamed when they committed abomination* 1.

nay

may they were not at al ashamed, neither could they be ashamed, their minds were wholly deluded, they did not see the vilenes of their sins, and their hearts hardened, they could not be sensible of them, so the Prophet *Isa.* complains, chap. 3.9. *they declare their sin as Sodom*, they commit, evil openly and they are bold and brazen-faced, to persist in what they do commit, they fear not who know it and they shame not to own it, I knew saith the Lord, *thy brow was brass, and thy neck like an iron sinnew*, the heart buckles not, its an iron sinnew the face blusheth not, its brass, harlot-like.

2. *Another sort who are so far from bearing the shame they do deserve, that out of their impudency they do rather cast shame upon the truth it self that would discover their sin and so the messenger that brings it.* Thus out of this devilish wretchednes and impudencie they dare to flout God to his face, and cast scorn and contempt upon the truth, rather than they wil lye under contempt themselves; and therefore it is the prophet looks at it as desperate, beyond hope or help, *Hos.* 4. 4. let no man strive with another or reprove him, for this people, are as they that strive with the priest, they contemn him and his reproof, so far are they from being content to take it, or the due shame which it discovers; of this stamp were those impudent scorners, who jeared the Prophet to his face, and made a jeast of the threatnings he delivered, *Isa.* 22. 12. *In the day the Lord called to weeping and mourning and baldnes and to girding with sackcloath and behold joy and gladnes, slaying of oxen and killing of sheep, let us eat and drink, for to morow we shal dye*, q. d. do you not hear the dreadful threatning that Isaiah hath denounced, do ye not expect to dye masters? do not your hearts shake within you to hear such tidings, let us not dye fasting, we wil take our meat sure before our enemies take away our lives, if we must dy as the prophet saith, let us be merry before our death, It were revealed to me saies the Prophet from

from the Lord of hosts, *surely this iniquity shal not be purged from you, til you dye*, that is, never; so tel the rebellious servant of his or her rugged carriage, unruly languagé, that they have *tongues set on fire of hel*, unweariable in wording of it, slighting and gainsaying, *Titus.* 2. 9. *Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters to please them wel in al things, not answering again*; because they are stopped from answering frampfully, therefore they wil not modestly and in meekness of wisdom ask counsel and direction from a Governor, wish them ask your Mistres, enquire of your Master, no no, I must not speak, I promise you, would I were Governor, they cannot lin, they must be pleased in al things, whether they please God or no.

Thus because their devillish heart cannot bear the truth, they flout the truth and cast it away in a scorn, as though they should say, you may see what sweet rules the scripture gives for the Government of servants, nay how unequal and unreasonable they be, which is such hideous and hellish blasphemy, that the heart of *Belzebub* in his cold blood would blush to vent it.

3. These two sorts out of a stupid impudency are not capable of shame, *there be two other sorts that out of subtilty of pride are unwilling to bear it, such are those who in the third ranck, seek up al shameful hidings that may be imagined, strugle as for life to the utmost of their power and policie, that they may shift off the shame, and make an escape from under that righteous reproach and contempt which the vileneß of their carriages, have justly brought upon themselves*, sometimes in silence burying and hiding of it. As *Judah* his incest *Gen.* 38. 23. *When he sent the kid and found not the harlot, he was content to let her go away with his ring and bracelet, lest (saith he) we be ashamed.* So *David* would have covered his folly with *Bathsheba, by sending* Uriah *to his own house*, 2 Sam. 11. And for a push the very servants of the Lord may be surprised with this sinful

ful shifting away of their shame from them, and al that while never see their sincerity nor find peace, but when they are brought to see their sin, then they yield immediately 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. *I have* (*saith* David) *sinned against the Lord.* Sometime by falshood gainsaying and denying, so Gehazi 2 *Kings*, 5. 25. *Where hast thou been* Gehazi, *thy servant went no whither.* Sometime colouring, excusing putting it off as *Saul* to *Samuel* first it were not done, then the people did it, then he did it, but for sacrifice, and for love to Gods worship, 1 *Sam.* 15. and in the issue he would be helped against his shame but not against his sin, *yet honor me before the people v.* 30. he doth not say let me be humbled before the people who have sinned before them; of this rank are these, when the stals of Conscience and the pressures of their spirits constrain them to confess, and seek for ease, their complaints are like Lapwings cryes, farthest from their nest or their bosom distempers which lye in the deck, onely their acknowledgments are so general and of such evils that more or less belong to al and therefore they conceive they are yet under a safe cover, little shame wil fal to their share; Oh they are proud, and dead hearted, and have a deal of self within them; the issue is here, and the English is this, I say I am thus, and who is not so more or less? and so a little shame wil come to their allowance and allotment; And if their words which fal from them give a prudent man advantage of further enquirie, and just suspicion to lay his hand upon the loathsom sore, you wil see what shuffling, and winding and biting of the lip, wil presently appear.

4. *The fourth and last sort are such who when the arrowes of the Lord have stuck fast in them, and the venom therof hath drunk up their spirits, when the poyson of their sin and pangs of conscience like a strong potion hath made them extremely sick that they are not able to conceal their evils any longer, but the vengeance*

of

of the Lord forceth them to vomit out al their filth to the ful, as a stiring potion kept in, works with much violence, but when its over and they have thus taken the shame, its with no content to them, its a secret torment, that their own tongues have gone beyond their own intents, they do inwardly repine, and be:ool themselves and could eat their flesh that ever they should lay themselves open so to contempt: and therefore they begin to devise wayes and means, how to mitigate the matter that it may not seem loathsom nor they so vile by reason of it and therefore they make constructions of some things, and interpretations of others, and then lay the extremity upon their distemper which was fired and followed by Satan, that they belyed themselves in some things and said they knew not what and thus like the unclean dog they lick up their vomit again they cannot be quit of the shame and wash away the filth, they have flung in their own faces, but they are in no wise content with it, and therefore would fain get it off, by al the means they can devise, thus their sins come to be healed too soon, like a sore that closeth too fast, not being daily tented and opened, and so it festers again and proves dangerous, so it is with the soul when it is not tented with daily taking shame for the evil, and so kept open, it again rankles and growes worse;

But how shal we know that we are content to take shame for sin, by a right confession of it. *Quest.*

I answer, that wil appear in four particular evidences. *Answ.*

The heart that is indeed content to take shame for the sin it hath committed, and stands guilty of, it hath this disposition wrought in it, and expresseth this affection also, as occasion serves; namely, it opposeth not that Truth which doth evidently discover a mans shame, and how worthily he deserves it, though it doth it sharply. To be content with a thing, and to be opposite against the same thing, implies a professed contradiction, I.

which neither Reason allows, nor common sence will admit: He that is content in earnest with the portion and condition that is carved out to him, in the course of Providence, when it's offered he welcoms it, when it's come, and that he hath it in his possession, closeth therewith as that which is a suitable good, and most serviceable to him for the present necessity, all circumstances considered: An humbled heart takes his shame as a sick man doth his physick, he could heartily wish he did not need it, and yet as the case stands, he cannot want it, but in reason he shal want his Cure and health; the potion is loathsom to take, and troublesom in the working of it, but the disease he knows to be far worse, and more dangerous, which he conceives may be purged by the use of this means, and therefore seeks it earnestly, and is not content without it, and glad indeed to be so troubled, because he may be eased as he hopes: So it is with a heart truly sensible of sin, and turned from it, looks at this shame as a most loathsom and tedious potion, and could have wished, and that heartily, he had never need of it, had never so miscarried himself as to have deserved it; but as the case now stands, the dishonor done to Gods Name and Truth, the scandal to others, the danger to the spiritual and everlasting welfare of his own soul, he looks at the Truth which shal be most evident, and most sharply set on as the most special Receipt, and Soveraign Medicine, which he is glad to seek, and more glad to take, that the noysom distempers may be taken from his soul, the dishonor from Gods Name, and scandal from before the way of his Brethren: contentedness to have a thing, and crosness of spirit to resist that which brings it, cannot stand together; and in this sence it is you shal find the Saints pray so earnestly, and affectionately for the keeping away of shame sometimes, *Psal.* 119. *Turn from me rebuke and shame*; and again, *Let me not be ashamed.* And sometime again so willingly to welcom and entertain it, *We lie down in our shame,*

shame, and are covered with confusion, Jer. 3. last. Shame is a heavy curse, as deserved by sin, and justly inflicted from the Lord; but to accept of it with an undersabasedness of heart, as the punishment of our iniquity from the hand of the Lord, this is indeed the work of Grace: and a gracious heart will not side it against that Truth, which will pass the sentence of shame upon it, as the just fruit of our evil doings, and as a means so sanctified, to work a hatred against it in our selves, and to remove the scandal of it from others; and therefore strives not by restless cavils and evasions to make an escape from the evidence of the Word in the work of Conviction, when a mans errors should be discovered; nor yet doth repine at, nor bear a privy grudg after the conviction, lies not under the Truth as the Malefactor upon the rack, which he therefore bears, not because indeed he cannot help himself against it, with all the troublesom stirring he can use; but his soul inwardly approves of that word which judgeth his person and practice vile as himself doth: Thus the word in the Original, which signifies confession properly, ὁμολογεω, to speak as God speaks, to judg as God judgeth of his sin; this hath been the constant guize of the Saints, touched sincerely with remorse for their sin: A word snibs *David*, *Thou art the man*; presently, *I have sinned*, saith he. A wink or a look of the Lord Jesus, makes *Peter* lie at his foot, *Go out and weep bitterly*, who had immediately before in a faithless cowardice basely denied him. As it is with a Steed of a tender mouth, feels his Bit presently, the least check of the Rider staies him, turns him which way he will: So it is with a tender Conscience, fals under the greatest shame that the least evidence of Argument will check him withal: So *Ezekiah*, though it were a sharp word, and the threatening severe, *Isai.* 39. last, yet saies he, *The Word of the Lord is a good Word*; my heart is naught, my carriage naught, my apprehensions naught and erroneous, but the

the Word of the Lord is good; and the holy Apostle in that inward combate, speaks in the Name of all the Saints in the like case, *Rom.* 7. 14. *For we know that the Law is spiritual, holy, and good.* [WE] *i.e.* all that know God, the work of his Grace, the purity of the Truth; they, and I and al, confess the Law is Spiritual, that is for ever to be honored, loved, obeyed, *but I am carnal*; a good and holy Law, but an evil and unholy heart; true it is, that carnal and hollow-hearted Hypocrites, may sometimes have their Consciences so far awed with the Soveraign power of the Truth, that they may yield fainedly thereunto, and in outward appearance readily profess their approbation thereof, with the condemnation of themselves, and their own courses, because they have no other way to gain ease and quiet to their own Consciences, now clamoring against them, or their acceptance with men, their carriages being gross and inexcusable, and therefore must so far bear the shame, because he sees he cannot excuse his folly, or sin being so open, but he shal be accounted impudent in denying and sinning; but al this while his heart is carried with an inward distast against it, and by a privy spleen imbittered so as to conspire secretly the disparagement of it: As it fared with those treacherous Jews when they saw no way, and therefore had no hope to take away the life of *Paul* by open violence; then they did cunningly plot it, by a color of fair pretence, and carried it thus: *Acts*, 23. 14. *They would have him brought down out of the Castle, as though they would enquire something more perfectly of him; and we, ere ever he come neer, will be ready to kill him.* So these false-hearted Creatures make it by their fair pretences, that they would enquire more perfectly concerning the Truth; the Servant craves Counsel how he should subdue the ruggedness of his Spirit, the froward wife how she should overcome her wayward, peevish disposition, they wil enquire more perfectly, as though they would obey perfectly,

perfectly, submit perfectly, be perfect Servants, wives, &c. But alas, there is a conspiracy in their hearts against the strict waies of God: So it was with *Balaam*, he hath never done sacrificing to enquire the wil of God, and yet his heart inwardly opposeth and resists his wil, and this shewed it self in open violence, and contempt of the Command and Charge, *Numb.* 24. 1.

2. *A heart content to take the shame, is not offended with the party, friend, or enemy, that wil lay the shame upon him; he knows it is the burden which he ought to bear, and if therefore any man wil give him a lift, and help him to take it up, he wil take it kindly at his hands*: It's against common sence to conceive that one should be offended with another, or take it grievously that he doth any thing which he knows would, and he conceives wil give him content: No man can be offended in Reason with the party for such a carriage or doing, such a thing, wherein he is contented, and with which he is pleased: True it is, shame in it self, is exceeding distastful to flesh and blood, and in truth nothing more cross and contrary to an ingenious spirit; Praise is the priviledg and prerogative of a reasonable Agent, who acts by Counsel, and therefore other Creatures are not so capable of it, nor do we give it as their due, we commend not the fire for burning heavy things, for falling donward; they cannot but do their work, and therefore no praise, no thanks to them for their deed; but Agents as Men and Angels who work by Counsel, who have wit and wisdom to contrive several waies, conceive the best, and wil and care to follow that when they might have done other out of their liberty: Shame therefore crossing a man in his special priviledg, his proper free hold, it must in it self be very grievous, and a tedious burden, but as he sees his duty in it, and the good that comes by it, and withal his just desert by reason of his filthiness, he is not offended with the presence of the Chirurgeon, but he is glad to see him, and his Instruments, though sharp and keen, which

which may lance his imposthume, and so save his life, whenas a naughty heart who would not have another take away his sin, he is vexed inwardly at the least, that he laies the shame and disparagement upon him for it: See this odds in those two Kings, *Ahab* and *Jehosaphat*, the one a self-seeking deluded Hypocrite, when he was under the whip and terror of Gods stroak and wrath, he then humbles his soul, fasts and praies, and that in print as it were, acts his part in that extraordinary duty with outward exactness, and therefore in reason it cannot but be conceived he bewailed his sin, confessed his failings, and yet he that hated *Elijah*, 1 Kings, 21. 20. he hates also *Micaiah*, 1 Kings, 22. 8. *There is yet one Micaiah*, q. d. We are rid of the most of them, but yet One is our vexation, *and I hate him*, because he hates my sin, and wil never speak good, that is, speak that which pleaseth my corruption, and therefore displeaseth me. But good *Jehosaphat* he was not willing to hear his words, much less able to bear them, and therfore expresseth himself quite contrary, *Let not the King say so*; and of the same frame he was when it came home to his own particular, 2 *Chron.* 19. 2. *When* Jehu *the Seer met him* after the Battel, and his discomfiture, and set a heavy reproof upon him, *should'st thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore there is wrath upon thee from the Lord*; the Text intimates he was no whit offended with the Message, or the man, but yielded to the one, and lovingly imbraced the other, and set presently about the reformation. When *Abigail* met *David* now upon his march so justly provoked, armed also with power and rage; and therefore if we should look at her, that was to discover the sinfulness of his proceedings, and stop him therein, or at *David* so wronged and provoked, and now upon the sign as the chief Commander in the head of his troops, to be stopped, and that by the voyce of a woman, in reason it cannot be conceived that ever she should have brought him

him, whose heart was like the heart of a Lyon, and now in his heat transported with wrath, to have seen himself, and sate down under the shame of his wrath; yet Oh, the power of a gracious Spirit, he is content upon all these disadvantages to see his sin, and take his shame with a thankful heart, *Blessed be God, and blessed be thy Counsel, and blessed be thou, who hast discovered the sinfulness of my rage, and hast kept me from shedding blood,* 1 Sam. 25. 32. and it's not only his practice, but his prayer, *Let the righteous smite me, it shall not break my head, it shal be as a precious Oyl,* Psal. 141.

Quest. *But may not, and do not many times, even such who are truly gracious, have their spirits imbittered, and their boisterous passions carried against such who shall lay the shame upon them by reason of their sin? See what* Asa *did unto the Seer, when he handled him hardly, and dealt roughly with him,* Herein thou hast dealt foolishly; *the Text saies,* he was wroth with the Seer, and put him into prison, 2 *Chron.* 16. 10.

Answ. As touching the Example, the strangeness of the carriage, his practice so gross, he imprisoneth the Prophet, and crusheth others who in likelihood stood for the Prophet, encreaseth in his evil, and grows further off from God, goes off the Stage without any record of Repentance, as ver. 11, 12. The strangeness of the carriage I confess, makes me sometimes wonder where the Truth of Grace was; and if a man list to be troublesom, and to quarrel with his course, he might darken the evidence of his uprightness: That which is said of him, is only two things; 1. *His heart was perfect all his daies*: 2. *He did that which was right, as* David *his Father*: To which I could say, That this comparison, and so perfection is only to be attended in regard of that particular at which it points, namely, in maintaining the Truth of Worship, and therein he held it out from first to last; which שלם signifies; but whether in his whol he were so, the story evinceth not, and his miscarriages ex-

pressed, and in which he lives and dies, without any record of reformation, speaks dreadfully against him, his last being the worst, *He sought to the Physitian, and not unto God, and so dies*; the same Phrase you may see used in a like sence, 1 *Kings*, 11.6. Solomons *heart was not perfect with God as* Davids *was, i. e.* Though he had truth of Grace, yet he was not perfect and intire in maintaining the Truth of his Worship: If a man may not be perfect in some case, and yet sincere; so he may be perfect in some other, and yet not sincere: For if the absence of it doth not take away sincerity, the presence of it wil not argue and conclude it: But we will keep the Road, because the consent of the Judicious carries it that way; and so I Answer Secondly.

2. It's possible for a gracious heart in a present push of a Temptation to have his spirit rising, and through the strength of pride, and passion to be carried with dislike of the party, who shal by evidence of Truth, set on his sin and shame; but this is but in a pang, and surprisal, he is not now himself, this is not the man, and therefore his state is not to be judged by this.

3. Nay Thirdly, In case the party be not convinced of the equity and truth of the discovery, and of his own evil, in stumbling at the parties that dispensed it, he may continue long in such a distemper, and so proceed harshly upon such erroneous ground, to be offended with such expressions, because he conceives he justly may: this happily may be the ground of *Asa* his former proceeding in so fierce a manner with the Prophet, as conceiving that he had gone beyond his commission, and either reproved him not so justly as he should, at the least not in that under and respective manner, as became the power and Soveraignty of *Asa*, or subjection which the Prophet should have remembred & acknowledged to be due; and this may seem somwhat probable becaus he claps him close prisoner, puts him into little Ease, as being guilty of no less than high Treason committed against his per-

son,

son, *Jun. in locum.* But while the soul is thus deluded and taken aside with a proud, self-deceiving frame, if we may look at the remarkable hand of God against such distempers as the example of *Asa* presents it before us, such persons wil each day be more blinded and unable to see their sin, so was he; more acted by the power of it, and taken aside by it, so was he, he puts others into prison not long after; more liable to some direful destroying plagues, so was he, his disease strange and irrecoverable; and in reason is like to die without comfort to his Conscience, or honor to his name; so did he.

In the fourth place, Whatever becomes of the former example, leaving secret things to Gods good pleasure, the Rule of Truth stands as Mount *Zion*, and wil never fail: He that after conviction by any Instrument sent of God, and revealing his way according to his wil, *despiseth such a messenger, despiseth him that sent him*, Luk. 10. 16. He that after Conviction, seeing the Truth and Authority of Christ, stumbles yet at him, and is offended at Christ, it's a note he shal be ruinated by the Lord, *he that falls upon this stone, shall be broken to pieces*; he that is offended at the Lord Jesus, shal perish; he that is offended at such whom he sends as Messengers of his Mind and Truth, and that after Conviction and Information, is offended at the Lord Jesus; therefore such a one must needs perish, hath no part in the Lord Jesus, nor yet were ever made partakers of the saving work of his Grace. 4.

He that takes shame with a contented heart, is neither restlesly disquieted, nor discouraged in the bearing of it; for to be contented, and yet discouraged, cannot stand together; but such a soul sits down in silence, submits himself meekly under the hand of the Almighty, goes away well apayed with whatever disparagement is cast upon him, by reason of his desert, and takes it as an allowance set our unto him by the Lord; he can look upon it, and lie down under it, with stilness and quiet- *Evid.* 3.

neſs of Spirit: So the Apoſtle recals and recounts his former loathſom miſcarriages upon each occaſion, breaks kindly with the freſh abaſement of himſelf in the ſight of God and man; *I was a perſecuter, blaſphemous, and injurious, not worthy to be called an Apoſtle, for I perſecuted the Church, Chriſt came to ſave ſinners, of whom I am chief.* So *Dan.* 9. 17. *Oh Lord, Righteouſneſs belongeth to thee, but unto us, ſhame and confuſion of face*; he looks at it as their due, owns it as their portion, which is appropriated to them, and belongs to them of right, and reſts ſatisfied therein. Nay, the heart truly called, is here indeed moſt comforted, when it can take the greateſt ſhame with greateſt content, and that when it ſeems moſt loathſom, and himſelf for it. The ſick Patient is moſt comforted with the Vomit when it works moſt vehemently, becauſe he knows the more ſick it makes him, the ſooner it wil make him wel; but when it lies like a dead drug in the ſtomach, ſtirs him leaſt, endangers him moſt, Oh ſaies the Patient, it made me marvelous ſick, but I was marvelous glad, it wrought kindly upon the Humor, and I expect a Cure, my ſtomach is much cleanſed, *periſſem, niſi periiſſem*; the greateſt ſhame that ever I received, did me the moſt good, was the beſt Phyſick I could ever take, I had never parted with my ſin, but my ſhame weaned me from it. Whereas a falſe heart never yet truly turned from his ſin, and ſincerely humbled; if the venom of Gods vengeance give him a Vomit, and make him caſt out all his filth by confeſſion in his own face, there follows ſuch wearish wraſtlings of Spirit, ſuch reſtleſs and boiſterous hurries of thoughts, ſits down diſconſolate, *Rachel like, cannot be comforted*, becauſe their Honor is not, their Credit and Reſpect is not, lies a bleeding as they ſuppoſe, and not likely to be recovered; he cannot look upon his reproach, but he is weary of his life, his ſpirit faints, his meat wil not down, his ſleep departs, what avails all if yet his ſhame remains? he would be any-

1 *Tim.* 1 13. 15.

any thing and any where, rather than under the foot of contempt.

A heart that is content to take shame wil not choose unlawful means in cold blood and upon consideration to remove it; he is discontended with his sin, not with his shame, he wil not therefore choose sinful means to be freed from it; So the good theif *Luk.* 23 41. *we are justly here receiving the due reward of our deeds*; the punishment and plague a heart abased takes as just, and therefore wil not do that which is unjust to be quit of them, whereas the haughty hipocrite is so impatient under reproach that he wil rather break under his shame than with quietness bear it, he cares not what he doth or suffers if he may not suffer that, So *Abimelech.* Judg. 9. 54. *Saul*: 1. *Sam.* 31. 4. *Achitophel*, 2. Sam. 17. 23. al of them used unlawful means to be rid of their shame, *Job.* was of another temper though his temptations were strong to carry him, and counsel wretched which was given to perswade him to another course, *Job.* 2. 9. *dost thou stil continue in thine uprightness blessing God, and dying*, q. d. you may see what you get by your holiness and dependance, is it not better not to be than to be thus, this is the meaning, but his answer shewes another resolution *shal we receive good from the hand of God and not evil?* the good God owes us not, and yet he gives it, the evil we deserve and therefore should be quiet if he bring it. Evid. 4.

The fourth use is for EXHORTATION, *If you know these things as I am perswaded you do; then be entreated in the name of the Lord Jesus to walk in that way that God hath revealed*, this is the baseness of our hearts we are loath to unbuckle our vile and secret distempers, they are shameful themselves and yet we are loath to take shame for them; therefore deal openly and freely with your selves, and confess your sins freely & fully that God may deal mercifully with you; *hath the Lord at any time let in this horror into thy soul and is* Use 4.

thy

thy heart now troubled at the word, and after al thy prayers and tears, and pains and means using with uprightneß, do thy corruptions ſtil remain? are they not yet ſubdued? canſt thou not yet get aſſurance of the pardon of them, I ſay then caſt away thy ſhameful hideing and concealing of ſin; and do not ſay what wil men and Miniſters ſay of me, away with theſe ſhifts, God calls thee to confeſſion, the Saints have done it, and thou muſt, nay thou wilt if ever thy heart be kindly broken as it ſhould be, in ſome meaſure pleaſing to God and profitable to thy ſelf.

Queſt. *But ſome may ſay how ſhould we do it?*

Anſw. For anſwer hereunto, I wil firſt give ſome directions how to do it; Secondly I wil give ſome motives to work our hearts to the ſame.

I. *Be wiſe in chooſing the party to whom you confeß your ſins,* for every wide mouthed veſſel is not fit to receive precious liquor; ſo this confeſſion is not to be opened to every carnal wretch that wil blaze it abroad, nor to every Godly man, no nor Miniſter neither. The Miniſter to whom you confeſs ought to have theſe three graces.

1. *Firſt he muſt be a skilful and able Miniſter of God,* one that is trained up and is maſter of his art, and ſo experienced that he might be able in ſome meaſure to find out the nature of the diſeaſe; Not that any Miniſter under heaven, can give pardon to a poor ſinner, but onely he is able Miniſterially to do it under God; he muſt be able *to approve himſelf as the Miniſter of God; he muſt have the tongue of the learned and be able to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon Iſa.* 50. 4. he muſt be able to break the heart and prepare the ſoul for Chriſt, and then to apply the promiſes of the Goſpel to him.

2. *He muſt be a merciful Phyſitian, one that wil pity a poor ſoul*; they that have experience of trouble and miſery in themſelves are moſt compaſſionate to others in diſtreſs, he that hath been toſſed in the ſea wil pity others

thers that have been in the ſame danger.

Laſtly he muſt be a faithful Miniſter, one that wil not fit mens humors, nor anſwer the deſires of their hearts in ſpeaking what they would have him, *but his faithfulneſs muſt appear in two things*, 1. *In dealing plainly with a man about his ſpiritual eſtate*; what ever a mans place and condition be, if he have a proud heart he muſt labor to humble him, he muſt apply a ſalve fitting for the ſore; 2. *And he muſt be faithful in keeping ſecret the ſin that is laid open to him*, that nothing may fly abroad no not after his death except it be in ſome caſes.

Now what remains but that you al be moved to take up this duty, and provoke your hearts freely to confeſs your evil wayes, to which purpoſe let me give you three motives.

Firſt becauſe it is a very honourable thing and wil exceedingly promote the cauſe of a Chriſtian: you wil hardly yield to this on the ſudden; a man thinks that if the Miniſter knew his vileneſs he wil abhor him for it; but (I aſſure you brethren,) then is nothing that doth more ſet forth the honor of a Chriſtian, and win the love of a Miniſter than this; Indeed it is a ſhame to commit ſin but no ſhame to confeſs ſin upon good grounds: nay when the heart comes kindly off, its admirable to ſee how a faithful Miniſter wil approve of ſuch perſons, his love is ſo great towards them, Oh ſaith the Miniſter it did me good to hear that man confeſs ſo freely, I hope the Lord hath wrought kindly in him; certainly now he is in the way to happineſs; Oh how I love him, I could be content to put that man in my boſom; whereas this overly and looſ dealing of yours is loathſom to us, do you think we perceive it not, yes we may feel it with our fingers and when you are gone I tel you what we thinke, ſurely that man is an hypocrite he hath an hollow heart, he is not willing [illegible] ſhame to himſelf for his ſin, his confe[illegible]me to the bottom.

3.

Motive, 1.

Confeſſion

Motive, 2.

Confeſſion is a matter of great ſafety: I take this to be the onely cauſe why many a man goes troubled and gets neither comfort in the pardon of his ſin, nor ſtrength againſt it, becauſe he comes not off kindly in this work of confeſſion; when you do nakedly open your ſins to a faithful Miniſter, you go out in battle againſt ſin and you have a ſecond in the field to ſtand by you, but eſpecially there is comfort in this particular, for the Miniſter will diſcover the luſts and deceits of your heart which you could not find out, and he will lay open the holds of Satan, and that means of comfort that you never knew; I am able to ſpeak it by experience, this hath broke the neck of many a ſoul, even becauſe he would go out in ſingle combat againſt Satan and do what he could, not revealing himſelf to others for help, was overthrown for ever. As it is with the impoſtumed part of a mans body, when a man lets out ſome of the corrupt matter and ſo skins it over, never healing it to the bottom, at laſt it cankers inwardly and comes to a gangrene, and the part muſt be cut off or elſe a man is in danger of his life, ſo when you let out ſome corruptions by an overly confeſſion but ſuffer ſome boſom luſt to remain ſtil, as malice or uncleanneſs, &c. then the ſoul cankers and Satan takes poſſeſſion of it, and the ſoul is carried into fearful abominations. Many have fallen foully, and lived long in their ſins and al becauſe they would not confeſs freely, therefore as you deſire to find out the deceitfulneſs of your corruptions confeſs them from the bottom of your ſouls.

Motive, 3.

This open and free confeſſion may maintain the ſecrecy of the ſoul, for the onely way to have a mans ſins covered, is to confeſs them, that ſo they may not be brought upon the ſtage before al the world.

Object.

Oh ſaith one, this is contrary to common reaſon; we are afraid to have our ſins known, that is our trouble, we keep our ſins cloſe, becauſe we would preſerve our honor.

I ſay

I ſay the onely way for Secrecy, is to reveal our ſins to ſome faithful Miniſter, for if we confeß our ſins God wil cover them; if you take ſhame to your ſelves God wil honor you; but if you wil not confeſs your ſins, God wil break open the dore of your hearts, and let in the light of his truth and the convicting power of his ſpirit and make it known to men and Angels to the ſhame of your perſons for ever. If *Judas* had taken notice of his ſin and yeelded to Chriſts accuſation, and deſired ſome conference with Chriſt privately, and ſaid good Lord, I am that *Judas* that hel-hound, that have received mercy from thee in the outward means, and have been entertained among thy people, yet it is I that have taken *the thirty pence*, Lord pardon this ſin and let this iniquitie never be layed to my charge. I doubt not but though *Judas* his ſoul could not be ſaved (becauſe that now we know Gods decree of him) yet God would have ſaved him from the publick ſhame that was caſt upon him for it; but he did not ſo but hid his malice in his heart, and profeſſed great matters of love to Chriſt and killed him, & thus he thought to cover his ſin wiſey; but what become of that? the Lord forced him to come and throw down his thirty pieces, and to vomit out his ſin to the everlaſting ſhame of his perſon, *I have ſinned ſayes he in betraying innotent blood*. So you that keep your ſins as ſugar under your tongues, you wil be looſ and unclean and malicious and covetous ſtil, wel, you wil have your thirty pieces ſtil, and they are layed up ſafe as *Achans wedg of gold was*, remember this, God wil one day open the cloſets of your hearts; and lay you upon your death-beds, and then happily you wil prove mad and vomit up al, were it not better to confeſs your ſins to ſome faithful Miniſter now? If you wil not give the Lord his glory, he wil diſtrain for it, and have it from your heart blood as *Julian* the Apoſtat ſaid, when the arrow was ſhot into his heart he plucked it out and cryed ſaying, *Thou* Galilean, *thou haſt over-*

Anſw.

Reader obſerve here.

come me, the Lord distrained for his glory, and had it out of his heart blood.

We are now come to the last Doctrine layd forth in the words, and that is.

Doct. *The soul that is truly pierced with Godly sorrow for sin, is carryed with a restless dislike against it, and separation from it.*

This is the main thing that was in the eye and aym of these converts, and intended principally in their complaint; *Men and bretheren the sins which you have discovered we cannot but own, and therefore we do confess them openly and freely*, in the sight of God and you his servants, and the dangers which you have also made known by reason thereof, we cannot but expect, the evils are great which we fear, oh the sins are far worse by which we have offended, *what shal we do?* direct any thing we wil follow it, command any thing we wil obey and submit thereunto with glad hearts that we may be rid of those evils; It had been happy for us that we had never listened to the counsel of the scribes and pharisees and been led by their examples, or carried with the croud, to the commission of such bloody evils, the guilt whereof is so great vileness of loathsomeness whereof is so hellish and unconceiveable, but that which is done and past cannot be recalled; but what shal we now do, is there nothing to be done against these high-handed abominations, which have done so much dishonor to Gods name, indignity to the Lord Jesus the Lord of life, so much injury to our own souls, and hazarded our everlasting happiness and comfort, what shal we do? If any thing that can be done by others, we wil seek far and near for help, If any thing that can be done by our selves we shal endeavor it to the utmost of our power, is there nothing

to

to be done that we might have the blood of theſe ſins of ours which have taken away the blood of the Lord Jeſus this is not an eſtate to be reſted in, a condition in which we muſt continu and quiet our ſelves, we ſhould be willing to do any thing againſt our ſins and ſelves; therfore the doctrine hence followes, that, *Sound contrition brings the ſoul to deteſtation againſt ſin and ſequeſtration from it.* When the people lamented after the Lord who had eſtranged himſelf ſo long time from them, *Samuel* that he might have aſſurance of their ſorrow that it were good, and that they might give in evidence their hearts were upright, he puts them upon this tryal *If indeed you wil return unto the Lord, put away your Idol,* 1 Sam. 7. 3. This was the practice of thoſe converts *Hoſea.* 14. 1. 2. 3. 4. When they had *taken words,* and deſired the Lord *to take away their iniquitie,* the proof of their ſorrow and repentance is ſhewed in that profeſſion of theirs, *Aſhur ſhal not ſave us, nor wil we go down to Egipt, nor wil we ſay to the works of our hands, ye are our Gods*; theſe were their ſpecial ſins and their proteſtation is bent in a peculiar manner to abandon them for ever; Thoſe alſo who were convinced of their ſinful departings from God by their *curious arts,* Acts. 19. 19. To ſhew their deteſtation of their ſins, they came al as one man, and were al of one mind; *they burn their books in the view of al the people,* before al men that the memory of ſuch evils might be abhorred, and the very inſtruments which had been abuſed to the practice of them might be removed from the face of the Earth, a contrite heart that makes a true confeſſion, he is ſaid in phraſe of ſcripture to ſpeak and judg as God doth of ſin, and to pass the ſame ſentence againſt it; Now Gods mind is, and the concluſion he hath ſet down is this, *thou ſhalt blot out the memory of them from under heaven,* and ſo would a broken heart do with his diſtempers.

There be two Particulars in the Doctrine, wherein the double Effect of ſound Contrition is diſcovered:

1. *Deteſtation of ſin.*
2. *Sequeſtration from ſin.*

We wil handle them both apart. Begin we firſt with that hatred and deteſtation, which the heart truly burdened carries againſt ſin: For the opening whereof we ſhal diſcover,

1. *What is the Nature of this hatred.*
2. *How it doth diſcover it ſelf, and may be diſcerned.*
3. *The Reaſons why this is required in this Work of Preparation.*

To the Firſt.

To difference this work of Hatred, as it is appropriate to this place, and comes now to conſideration, from the like diſpoſition and operation of ſoul which is wrought by the holy Ghoſt, and expreſſed by the Saints in the further progreſs of the work of Application; before it ariſeth to the full breadth and further perfection, unto which the Beleever arrives: It's a diſcovery which is attended with much difficulty and hardneſs; to lay out the peculiar bounds and limits of it, that each work may take that which is peculiar to it ſelf, and not interfer upon the other; it's a matter marvelous intricate and narrow for the ſearch: we ſhall labor *to be wiſe to ſobriety*, ſo far as light goes, and the Lord helps: We ſhal

shal cast that which we would speak by way of Explication, into several Conclusions, as apprehending that the easiest and most familiar way to communicate what may lend some little Direction this way. 573

As the first Adam *did depart from God, and in him all his Posterity; so the second* Adam, *the Lord Christ, doth bring back all his again unto God the Father by the contrary way.* In the departure of *Adam* and his Seed, this is plain to common apprehension, *There was first an Aversion, or turning from God; then a Conversion, or turning of the soul to the Creature*: this is the usual course, and the usual complaint, *They have forsaken the Fountain of Living Waters, and digged to themselves, Pits that will hold no water*, Jer. 2. 13. *Adam* attends not Gods Direction, and then he attends the delusion of the Enemy, contents not himself in what God had found, but finds out findings, therefore our Savior brings back his contrary way, begins where Satan ends as it were, there must be an Aversion and turning from the Creature, before there can be a conversion unto God; he came from God to the Creature, he must return from the Creature to God: but his aversion is first, that is, from his abusive cleaving to the Creature; for in truth, sin is nothing else but an inordinate affecting of these inferior things, Ambition is the inordinate affecting of praise, the aiery applause of men; Covetousness an inordinate seeking and surfetting upon the world; Uncleanness, an unruly and unreasonable pursuit of the delights of the Flesh; in a word, a perverted and exorbitant will inordinately following and pursuing the Creature, not from God, for God, but from a sinful disposition to self-ends; this is the frame of evil in the heart, the woof and web of wickedness lies there. Now *the Lord Jesus he comes*, 1 John, 3. 8, 9 *to destroy the works of the Devil*; the Original is, to unloose, and unravel, undo, or take down Satans work, as the word implies; and therefore he begins to pull down Conclus. 1.

down his work where he ended it, *viz.* He firſt works an Averſion from ſin, and the Creature ſinfully affected, and then in Nature and Order there will be converſion to God. The Point of the Compaſs cannot ſtand North and South together; firſt it muſt ſtand from the South, before it ſtand North: The face of the ſoul cannot ſtand God-ward, and Sin-ward, and Creature-ward. This is the courſe of the Scripture, and the conſtant expreſſion of it; *To turn from Idols to the living God, from darkneſs to light, from Satan to God.*

1 *Theſ.* 1. 9. *Acts.* 26. 18.

There is nothing in the ſoul that can turn the ſoul from ſin and the Creature, that which is wholly poſſeſſed and wholly acted by an inordinate affection to the Creature that can never turn from the Creature, 1 *Pet.* 4 2. *All men live according to the luſts of men, and the will of the Gentiles*; yea, *fulfil the deſires of the fleſh, and walk after the Prince of the Air.* Eph. 2. 2.

Concluſ. 2.

As a man cannot turn himſelf, ſo this firſt Averſion from ſin, and the Creature, is not wrought by any gracious habit that is put into the ſoul by the Lord, i. e. That is not the way and means by which this firſt Averſion and turning from ſin is wrought; And the Reaſons are,

Concluſ. 2.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, *All gracious qualities and habits* (as all other accidents and attendants upon things) *never have any being but in a ſubject; and therefore muſt firſt be there, before they can put forth any operation.* Wiſdom muſt firſt be in the mind before a man can act wiſely; Skil muſt be in the Head and Underſtanding of the Artificer, before he can work, build, and plant skilfully; Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, Patience in our Hearts, before we can work holily, patiently; and that's the Reaſon though we have the ſame faculties of mind and wil before our Converſion, as we have after, yet we neither do nor can put forth any gracious action before, but after Grace.

Hence it follows, That if the firſt Averſion from ſin were

were wrought by a habit of Grace, we ſhould firſt have this, *i. e.* The Habit of Grace ſhould be in the ſoul before it ſhould work this Averſion of the ſoul from ſin: but that implies a contradiction, that a man ſhould have Grace, and yet be wholly averted from God for the leaſt moment. 575

Secondly, *If the ſoul be uncapable in that condition, and under that conſideration to receive the Habit of Grace, then there cannot be a gracious habit in the ſoul to work any thing*: but while the ſoul is wholly poſſeſſed and acted by ſin, it is not capable of a gracious habit, no more than it's poſſible to be in light and darkneſs together. *The wiſdom of the Fleſh is enmity againſt God*, it is not ſubject, nay it cannot be ſubject to the Law; if not ſubject, then it cannot receive the gracious impreſſions of it, *Rom.* 8. 7. and *John*, 14. 17. it's ſaid of *the Comforter, that the world cannot receive him*; the iſſue is, if a gracious Habit neither is, nor can be there in the ſoul wholly poſſeſſed and averted from God by ſin, then this Averſion from ſin cannot be wrought by it. *Reaſ.* 2.

Though the Lord doth not put a gracious habit INTO *the Soul*, by which this may be done, yet the Spirit of Contrition puts forth an irreſiſtible power by which it works UPON the Soul; thus turned from God to ſin, to return it from ſin to God. For the Spirit in the Work of Application ſuſtains a double Office, and ſo a double Reſpect: *Concluſ.* 4.

As a Spirit { *Aſſiſting*, *Inhabiting*,

And yet the ſame Spirit of Regeneration in ſuch as ſhall be ſaved (taking Regeneration in the breadth thereof, including the whol Work) though the operation be double or divers, according to the diverſity of the ſubject, as the ſoul of a ſinner, upon which the work of Application muſt be made according to the degrees thereof.

The

The Spirit works upon the Soul in Preparation, to make way for gracious habits, but never inhabits the heart, makes the soul a Temple without some gracious qualification; 1 Cor. 6. 18, 19. *Ye are the Temples of the holy Ghost*: *Christ dwels in our hearts by Faith*, Eph. 3. 17. there is the Spirit inhabiting; yet it is said, *The world cannot receive the Spirit, because they do not see him, nor know him, but you know him, for he dwels in you, and abides with you*, John, 14. 17. yet those who are nothing for the while, but the world, the Spirit doth work upon such to cal them out of the world, *by turning of them from darkness to light.*

Conclus. 5. *The Lord Christ as the Second* Adam, *and the Head of those whom he shal bring back, and beget unto God the Father, in the vertue of his death he brings a Release from under the hand of Divine Justice, to reverse that Commission which sin and Satan had, to fasten the soul to the Creature, and so to sin, and by sin and the Creature to rule in it*: For when *Adam* jarred and justled against the Law, the Law was strong and hard, *i. e.* just; the Law and the Lord in Justice pushed *Adam* away from him, sin takes occasion to fall in, and by that advantage (when Divine Justice, by reason of his provocation, pushed him away) it carries him to the Creature, and the Devil by sin and the Creature challengeth Soveraignty over him: The Lord Jesus by and in the vertue of his death, suffering and satisfying Divine Justice, delivers both himself and his from the Authority of sin: *God raised him from the Grave, because it was impossible he should be held by the sorrows and power of the grave*, and therefore not by the power of sin and darkness, *Acts*, 2. 24. for they had no power but by vertue of Divine Justice; which being now appeased, their Commission is reversed and repealed: *By Death Christ destroyed him that had the power of Death, that is, the Devil*, Heb. 2. 14. So our Savior gives the ground of comfort and release to his,

I was

I was dead, and am alive, and behold I have the keyes of Hell and Death, Rev. 1. 18. The Lord saies to sin, hands off, that soul is mine, and doth therefore by the power of his Spirit, not only stop the work of sin, but over-bears, and abolisheth, and takes off the right of Rule which Satan by sin challenged, he brings the soul off from the Soveraignty of sin, into another Juridiction.

The Lord having forced the sinner (whereof I formerly disputed) *to feel sin as it is sin, to be cross to the end of his being*, though not to the corruption of the soul, yet to the Nature of the soul; and therefore as it's possible that the soul may be forced to feel, so now upon feeling, the soul finds it to be a most bitter thing, and that unto the being of the soul, as an immortal Creature made next for God as its last end. And therefore (Observe) though it want Spiritual and Supernatural ability to enter into combate, or vanquish a corruption by any Grace received, yet being sensible by the Spirit of Contrition of the evil of it, and so loosened from it, it becomes subject, & stands readily prepared to take any impression of the power of the Spirit, whereby the exercise and power of sin may be stopped, & the challenge of any right of Rule and Soveraignty may be shaken off, and for ever destroyed, and the soul be carried to God in Christ, to be owned, ruled, and blessed for ever. So that when Christ as the Second *Adam*, and Head of the Covenant, comes to take a soul, and to bring him from sin to God the Father; look by what irresistable power he acts in opposition and detestation against it, as cross to his Glory, the soul wanting power of its own, it takes advantage to fall in and yield to that power, and is acted and moved by the like opposition and detestation against its sin, according as the impression of the Spirit is left upon him: And hence it comes, the sinner is transported with that holy violence, and indignation at such times as afterward he doth never find, and may be, can never

Concluſ. 6.

Joſhua, 9. 10. *chap.* never again attain unto. As the Gibeonites when all the Princes of the Cities and Provinces were gathered together againſt them, they had not power in themſelves to oppoſe, yet withdraw themſelves they would from under their Rule and Confederacy, and yielded themſelves to the Authority and Soveraignty of *Joſhua*, though it were to hew wood and draw water; or as the Boat that is run a ground, and hath neither tackling nor Marriner, yet by a mighty wind, and a Spring Tide, he is carried with more ſpeed to the Haven than by all hands and helps he could ever after attain: So the Soul being acted wholly by that power and impreſſion of the Spirit, having yet no principle of its own, it's carried with a deteſtation againſt ſin; here Chriſt applies this power only, afterward in Sanctification we apply the power of Chriſts death to this end with him.

This is the firſt work of God in the extent of it, and the way he takes to turn the ſoul from ſin and the Creature: Fear ſtops him, ſorrow tires him, hatred turns him. Fear troubles his ſin, ſorrow looſens it, hatred abandons it. Fear finds the knot, Griefunties it, Hatred diſſolves and breaks it off. Fear queſtions the Lawfulneſs of the match between ſin and the ſoul, Sorrow gives in proof and evidence out of ſence of the evil of it, Hatred diſanuls the League, and ſues out an everlaſting Divorce betwixt ſin and the ſoul. This Hatred is the hatred of Preparation, not of Sanctification; the difference between which may be diſcerned by the former Diſcourſe.

1. That in Sanctification is from the Spirit *inhabiting*; this from the Spirit *Aſſiſting*.

2. That of Sanctification is *by a gracious habit infuſed into the Soul*; this is without a habit, *the Spirit only* by his irreſiſtible motion *working upon the ſoul*.

3. In that there is an inward Principle received, whereby we meet with Chriſt, and concur with him to the work; here we have no habit, and therefore no inward principle

principle to meet with Chriſt, he wholly and only acts upon us, and we act, as acted by him. Take the wheels of a Watch out of place, if you wil bring them into the right room and place, they wil then move, becauſe there is a principle of motion put into it. So of a Member out of Joynt, if you wil by ſtrong hand pul and move it unto the place, being wholly moved, it wil move into his order and rank, it doth not concur or meet with your hand for the joynting of it ſelf, but ſtirs wholly and only as ſtirred; but being ſettled and confirmed in the place, it wil move to your hand, and concur with your hand to help it ſelf. So here: That hatred in Sanctification we receive from our union with Chriſt; this the Spirit works upon us, to make way to bring us to Union with the Lord Jeſus; we muſt turn from our ſins, before we come to God, there muſt be an averſion from ſin, before there can be a converſion unto God; we cannot be under two Covenants; in the firſt *Adam*, and the ſecond; grow upon two ſtocks together. It's ſaid *that* Adam *begot a ſon in his own Image*, that a Son was generated by the firſt *Adam*, the act of Generation was no part of the Image, but the Image is the corruption of Nature that came by Generation: So that we are united, that's none of Chriſts Image, but the Image of Chriſt, which is our communion with him in his Graces, this Image and theſe graces iſſue from our union. The ſum in ſhort then is this: There muſt be an averſion from ſin, before converſion unto God: there is nothing in the ſoul that can work this, but Chriſt muſt do it. When Chriſt works this, it is not by any habit of Grace infuſed into the ſoul, but *by the motion and work of the Spirit upon the Soul.* In this work, Chriſt as the Head of the Covenant by vertue of his death, whereby he ſatisfied the Law, brings a releaſe from the hand of Divine Juſtice, to reverſe and repeal that Commiſſion by which ſin had Authority over the ſoul and Satan by ſin; ſo that the act of ſin is ſtopped, and the right of the Rule of ſin is

Gen. 5.

wholly diſannulled and made voyd; the contrite ſinner feeling the evil of ſin and yet no power of himſelf to oppoſe and ſubdu, look in what oppoſition and deteſtation the irreſiſtible power of the ſpirit goes out againſt ſin as acted by the impreſſion of that power, it acts by oppoſition and deteſtation againſt its ſin and is turned from it.

2. *How this hatred diſcovers it ſelf and how it may be diſcerned.*

1. *This hatred is attended with a continual fear of the preſence and the deadly infection of ſin, and ſo with a conſtant watch againſt it*; or a watchful fear is a never fayling work whereby this hatred expreſſeth it ſelf, in the carriage and daily converſation of a contrite ſinner, the venom of ſin which formerly he hath felt, the plague and vengeance which thoſe his diſtempers hath brought upon him, leaves ſo freſh and yet ſo dreadful a remembrance of them upon his ſoul that the very thoughts of them affright him, but any temptation or provocation that may draw him to the commiſſion of the like is ſo loathſom that the leaſt appearance that looks that way he ſees preſently and ſhakes at it, flyes it as the flames of hell, as that which wil hazard the happineſs of the ſoul and be as preſent death to him. As it is in the work of nature in the body of a man, he that hath ſurfeted upon ſome ſweet meat or ſome pleaſing potion that hath been prepared in a guilded cup,& happily ſuited with his palate for the preſent, but in iſſue had in reaſon hazarded his life, in his own ſence and each mans apprehenſion, but that the Lord was merciful; you need not preſs him with arguments, the loathing of his ſtomach and the very hatred and Antipathie that nature hath againſt that which procured the hazard, wil make him watchful and ſhy how he is deceived in that kind any more, the very ſight of the gally-pot, the ſent or ſmel

ſmel of the potion, yea the leaſt ſuſpicion that ſuch a receit is coming towards him, forceth him to fear and fly, his ſtomach begins to turn, riſeth from the table, removes out of the room, the frame of nature begins to fail and ſhake with the remembrance of the ſurfet and with the fear of the like danger; It behoves me to look what I take, it had like to have coſt my life, therefore I wil come there no more. So it is with a contrite ſinner that hath felt the poyſon of thoſe pleaſing diſtempers upon which his ſenſual heart hath ſurfeted it felt in the dayes of his folly which now he hath found by woful experience to be gal and wormwood to his Conſcience, the bane of his peace, and would have been the ruin of him, and his ſoul before this day, but that it hath pleaſed the Lord to reprieve him for the preſent, and not to execute his vengeance upon him, as he hath deſerved by reaſon of his former rebellion; therefore he cannot abide the ſight of the place where the ſin was committed, the preſence of the party, the companion that enticed, yea fears the the falſneſs and treachery of his own heart, leaſt that again ſhould betray him, thus you ſee in *Davids* profeſſion, *Pſal.* 101. 3. *I hate the work of them that turn aſide it ſhal not cleave to me*; Hatred is Eagle-eyed to obſerve the proceedings of the enemy, and out of a watchful fear to ſtop the paſſage, and to keep his approach that he cannot come near unto us. Happily temptations may preſs in with violence upon the ſoul, and the ſtrength of diſtempers may make fierce aſſaults, make batteries, nay make a breach happily and over-bear the ſinner, for the puſh: yet ſuch is the fear & watch that the heart is carried with through this hatred, that it wil prevent their approach or at leaſt never yield to their power; A chaſt Matron that truly hates the unchaſt enticements of adulterous mates, they may peſter her, trouble her, lie at her from day to day, though ſhe cannot keep her ſelf happily from being tempted, yet ſhe wil keep her ſelf unpotted, ſhe wil not be unchaſt nor unfaithful.

faithful. So it is with a heart that is carryed with deteſtation againſt evil, th ugh diſtempers and temptation may peſter it, yet they ſhal not cleave to it, nor it cleave to them; It may *do that which it hates* as *Paul* Rom. 7. 15. *what I hate that I do*, yet it wil hate its own doings, & its own ſelf ſo far as overborn thereby; the out-works may be taken, yet the ſoul ever entrencheth herſelf in this holy hatred of heart, and either it wil force them to fly, or it wil fly from them; though it cannot be quit of theſe In-mates but ſtil they wil abide in the ſoul, yea loaths them, and the ſoul for them, This is the order and method, that the Apoſtle layes forth in this work, when the Corinthians came to be touched with *Godly ſorrow*, *what indignation*, *what fear*, *what zeal*, *what revenge*? *&c.* 2 Cor. 7. 11. When the heart carries a deteſtation towards a corruption it ſtands againſt it as an enemy, then follows fear which is a behavior ſuitable to provide and prevent the policies, plottings, and way-layings thereof upon al occaſions, look as it is with a City that hath been beſiedged with a potent and Malicious enemy, if once the ſiedge be rayſed and the forces of the enemy put to rout and ſcattered, how wil the beſiedged party by a watchful fear ſtand upon their guard, ſtand centinel night and day, ſend out their perdues, and diſpatch a party in every coaſt to diſcover the carriage of the enemy, takes al the paſſages, maintains a narrow ſearch, no man goes out, no man comes in, but enquires & learns the intent of the enemy, whether he gathers forces, and maks head again, watcheth ſtrictly to deſcry his approach with the firſt apperance, its yet freſh in their minds into what great diſtreſs they were formerly brought, what cruelty they ſuffered, and that there was but a hairs bredth between them and death, with what fear and care wil they labor to prevent the like bondage again, as the Phyliſtians cryed one to another when the ark came into the field, for the ſafeguarding of their lives and liberties, quit your ſelves like men, Oh ye

ye Phyliſtins, leaſt you become ſervants to the Hebrewes. So it is with the ſinner who hath been beſiedged and held captive, under the tyranny and ſoveraignty of ſin and Satan, when the Lord by the power of ordinances ſhal caſt down the ſtrong holds, ſtop the act of ſin in the ſtrength and ſtream of it, diſanul and make voyd the authority of any right or claym the ſin could challenge in this work of contrition, and ſo reſcues the ſoul and rayſes the ſieg that Satan layd and maintayned againſt its diſtempers as the deadlieſt enemy it hath in al the world. No ſooner is the ſoul revolted from under the tyranny of corruption, but the fear of the former miſery forceth a man to mervailous circumſpection, to maintayn a careful watch, as ſuſpicious of a ſurpriſal, leaſt the old diſtempers ſhould gather head again; if any temptation or occaſion be preſented, any appearance of any provocation which may lead to the entertainment of any evil be caſt in, how doth the heart ſhrink and ſhake as though the enemy were now afreſh approaching; what narrow ſearch and inquiſition doth the ſoul ſet upin its daily courſe, weighs the words he ſpeaks, examines each thought and ſtirring of affection, whether there be any treacheries plotted, any correſpondence held, any preparation made for the recalling & entertainment of the former luſts and corruptions. Fear gives the Alarum preſently, ſets endeavour a work to prevent the evil, cryes out to heaven for ſuccor and relief; the diſobedient child, the ſtubborn and careleſs ſervant, were their hearts brought to this deteſtation of theſe their diſtempers you would ſee a new world, they would mind themſelves of their own miſcarriages, though you never remembred them, they would check themſelves for careleſſneſs though you never reproved them, they would be heart ſick of the ſtirrings of ſuch rebellions, though you never reckoned with them in that behalf; their own heart would cal to their remembrance their former extremities; It was not long ſince you were arraigned

raigned before the tribunal of the Lord, cast and condemned by the witness of the word, the verdict of your own Consciences and by the testimony of God himself, who is greater than your consciences; and yet hitherto respited, through the long sufferance of the Lord, and the riches of his mercy, you saw cause enough for ever to abhor those abominations and your selves for them; therefore God forbid I should rush into those evils again and plunge my self into everlasting confusion both of body and soul, I have cause to hate them as mine enemies, I will never harbor them as my friends.

2. *Where this hatred is throughly wrought in the soul against sin, it seeks the destruction of sin in ones self first, and in others also, so far as comes within the compass of a mans place and power*; The indignation begins at home, and is carryed most strongly against the evils of our own hearts, which are our greatest enemies, and have done us the greatest harm, and we by them have done the Lord the greatest dishonor, and we know these most in al the loathsomness of them, and in al the hainousness and heightning circumstances thereof, then we can be acquainted with the measure and scantling of any others miscarriages, and therefore the true convert sees himself most to seek the ruin and rooting out of them which would have wrought the ruin of his soul, but there he rests not, but what ever sins come within his reach, he labors the removal of them, out of the familyes where he dwels, out of the plantations where he lives, out of the companies and occasions, with whom he hath occasion to meet and meddle at any time: he that hates treason indeed, pursues the pack of conspirators, where ever they become, until there be not one remaining in the Nation; open both these a little.

1 *He labors the destruction of sin in his own soul and that two wayes.* 1. *He doth what he can himself.* 2. *He seeks for help from others that they may send in new supply of forces to do what he cannot.*

He

He ſets himſelf to the utmoſt of his power to procure the utter ruine of his luſts; as amongſt enemies, if there be a ſettled hatred indeed, they are not ſatisfyed, until they have the blood of each other, So it is here. Its not to weaken the work of ſin, to ſtop the ſpreading of it, to confine the compaſs of it, to ſome private courſe, or yet to impriſon it by reſtraint that it may not ſtir abroad, nor yet have the liberty of the priſon, but be layed aſide as the malifactor in the dungeon, no this hatred ſeeks the death and the not being of it, and until then its reſtleſs in purſuit. As *David* with his enimies *Pſal.* 78. 37. *I have purſued mine enimies and overtaken them, neither did I turn again until they were conſumed*, A contrite heart deals ſo with his diſtempers. He ceaſeth not until he ſee his deſire upon his enimies, until he hath his wil of him. And if we view the expreſſion of the ſcripture, we ſhal ſee how hatred vents itſelf againſt ſuch as be enimies, whoſe deſtruction it intends, partly by ſubtilty, partly by conſpiracy, its ſaid of the Egiptians, that God turned their hearts to hate his people, and the fruit of that is in the following words, and they dealt ſubtilly with them, what that ſubtilty was, the text diſcovers *Exod.* 1. 10. firſt they oppreſſed them with heavy burdens, then they plotted by trechery to kil their males in the birth, that ſo in iſſue they might take away their ſtrength and numbers alſo, in the iſſue there is ſubtilty which is one way how hatred expreſſeth itſelf. Againe if we look *Pſal.* 83. 2 to 6. the enemies of the Lord and his Church, who hate his hidden ones, *they have conſulted together with one conſent and are confederate*, Moab, Ammon, *and* Amalek, *&c.* there is a combination of al policies and power to overbear and deſtroy them. This is the nature of hatred when it is diſordred and unwarrantable in a wrong way; and the exerciſe and expreſſion of it wil be in ſome meaſure proportionable When its put forth in a right manner according to the

rule of God and the operation of his ſpirit againſt ſin. The contrite ſoul when its carried with this hateful deteſtation againſt its own abominations, by a ſpiritual kind of prudence, obſerves where the firſt ſtirrings and male ſtrength of our corruptions appear in the birth and breeding of them, in our minds and hearts, where the root and ſpawn of thoſe loathſom abominations have their warming and hatching in the heart. There hatred improves al prudence that may be to ſtifle thoſe diſtempers in the firſt ſtirrings of them, cruſh the Cockatrice in the ſhel, kil the Serpent in the egg, that they may never have being nor be brought forth into the world if it be poſſible. But if by policy, theſe ſpiritual enemies cannot be undermined, then this hatred brings the combined forces of confederated power of the whol man & his whol endeavor to deſtroy the neſts of thoſe noyſom luſts, what head can contrive, heart deſire, handwork, the endeavor accompliſh, head, and heart, and hand, deſires, endeavors, tears, prayers, in a deadly feud to purſue the ſpiritual enemyes to their not being.

2. *Thus he doth what he can in himſelf, and when that is not enough he ſeeks for help againſt theſe helliſh abominations from God by his Saints and al ſuch ordinances which he hath appointed for his ſuccour.* In a word the carriage of the heart of a contrite ſinner under this kindly hatred thus diſcovers it ſelf, he is willing to attend any means, but gives moſt welcome to ſuch as wil do moſt execution in the ſlaughter and deſtruction of his ſins for that is his ayme; nor wil he complement with the Lord, nor is he ſqeamiſh, or ſqeaſie ſtomached, that each diſpenſation muſt anſwer his expectation point vice, or elſe it wil not down; As it was with *Naaman* when Courtier-like-ſtate-complement more prevailed with him than his own health, *I had thought he would have come and layd his hand upon the ſore, and called upon his God*, ſo if the counſel be ſuggeſted in ſuch a ſeaſon, and ſuch intimations, the admonition with ſuch meekneſs,

meekness or by such a man &c. then he can hear and receive, otherwise he wil be wel contented rather to quarrel with the manner that crosseth him than embrace the truth which may help him against his sin, no this is far from a contrite heart, he passeth not much how or what the means are, or manner of the dispensation, if he find it to give a deadly blow to his distemper, its that which pleaseth him, he can easily pass by al the rest, as, be the person never so mean and unsuitable to the service, or the time unseasonable, as in *Abigail*, A General upon his design to be crossed and countermanded by a woman; A spirit that had not been very under, and hated his sin more than any enemy would have found many cavils, but he saw how it suited the slaughter of his sins, and he receives it gladly; nay be the manner rude and rugged, either not suiting the place of him that speaks, nor the person to whom its spoken, yet the broken heart takes it quietly, As in that of *Joab* to *David*; 2. Sam. 19. 5. 6. 7. though the physick was good it was too hot, yet because it was wholsom, the King took it down; nay when neither the person nor manner nor matter it self which is spoken are antwerable to the service, yet if he sees the hand of God to come out against his corruptions, he takes that advantage against his distemper and passeth by the other. 2 *Sam.* 16. 7. 11. *when* Shimei *cursed* David, *let him alone saith he, the Lord hath bidden him curse it may be the Lord wil look upon me for good. &c.* As *Saul* entertained the message of the *Ziphites*, concerning *David* whom he hated and whose death he hunted after; 1 *Sam.* 23. 19. *then came the* Ziphites *to* Saul *saying, doth not* David *hide himself with us in strong holds, in the wood, in the hill of* Hackelah, *now therefore O King come down according to al the desire of thy heart, and our part shal be to deliver him into the Kings hand. And* Saul *said blessed be the Lord, for ye have had compassion upon me, go and prepare, see his place where his haunt is, and take knowledg of his*

lurking places where he hides himself, so the contrite sinner that seeks the death and destruction of his sins, it gladly welcomes what ever means are most searching, sharpest reproofes, cleerest discoveries, convicting arguments that wil discover the haunts and lurking places of a mans lusts and secret shiftings of devices; Oh these hit the desire of his heart, he counts them blessed counsels blessed reproofes *blessed be ye of the Lord that have compassion on my soul*, to take those distempers from me that would take away my soul from God, and life and happiness from my soul; nay the soul wil say, I see something but O search more narrowly, examin yet more throughly al the sinful windings and turnings of my heart and I wil joyn with you in al such convictions and tryals, and if there be any way of wickedness, any crevis and corner of falshood to be found in the whol frame of my heart, I hope God wil reveal and remove, and I wil deal nakedly. Such smitings are as precious balms that do not break the head, but bring a healing virtue, comfort a mans heart, content his head and apprehensions also.

2. *Thus he proceeds against his own sin, but there this hatred rests not; but he labors also the removal of sin in whomsoever he finds it, wheresoever he is, and with whomsoever he converseth*: If there be any corruption stirring, his enemies appearing, his hatred stirs presently, his heart riseth against it, attacheth the Traitor; if any be under pressures, he pities them tenderly; if in distress of Spirit, he comforts in much compassion, and fortifies against the common enemy: If he sees any go out of the way, led aside with their own distempers, Satans delusion, he cannot keep off from counselling, reproving, perswading. The Servant that could side it with fellow Servants in stubborn, idle, and careless behavior, consult with them, and content with them, suit with them, give them counsel, keep their counsel, before, they were brethren in iniquity; but when his heart comes

comes to be pierced, and the soul transported with hatred, you shal see the wind in another door; if he see them lazy and idle, he wil quicken them; if stubborn and perverse, he wil seasonably advise and pursue them with reproofs, and if his counsels cannot take place, he wil make his complaints to the Governor for redress, he cannot endure to see sin thrive, and the Traitor live. But if the Lord put any Authority into his hand, he wil express it to the utmost of al his power, and that with the utmost indignation that the nature of the thing wil bear. As good *Josiah*, 2 Chron. 34. 4, 5, 6. *He commanded to break down the Altars, cut down the Groves, carved and molten Images, made dust of them, and burnt the bones of the Priests upon the Altar in the detestation of their Sacrifices; nay, he took away all the abominations of all the Countries that appertained to Israel, and made all that were present to serve the Lord*: This Indignation expresseth it self against sin, and all that appertains to it, and have been Instruments to the commission of it. As an Adulterous woman in distress of conscience, tore the hair that she had crisped, and disfigured the face that she had painted, and prided her self, loathed to look upon the tyres and garments which she had worn to make her beauty a bait and a snare to others. So *Mary Magdalen, &c.*

3. *But if yet the Nation of those noysom corruptions cannot be utterly destroyed, but sins live, and are mighty abroad, and remain in the heart: this hatred is beyond all hope and possibility of reconciliation, admits no terms of peace, no condition of agreement that can be devised or offered, will be entertained,* holds out the quarrel and opposition unto death; nay, is willing to die, and put an end to his daies, that he may see an end of his abominations: As God with *Amaleck*, Exod. 17. last, he commanded it *to be writ for a memorial in a book, for God hath sworn he will have war with* Amalek *for ever, and put out his name from under Heaven*;

ven; this hatred as in deadly feuds gives no quarter, the ſoul wil not tribute his Corruptions, and ſerve his own turn of them, but wages War with them until they be utterly deſtroyed from off the face of the Earth: The Counſel that God gave to the Iſraelites, it carefully and exactly keeps; *Be ſure you make no Covenant with them, but ſmite them, and utterly deſtroy them.* Deut. 7. 23. &c.

Reaſons of the Point are Three.

Reaſ. 1. *Without this, there is no way to come to Chriſt*; for there is no coming of Faith into the ſoul: *No man can ſerve two Maſters; for if he love the one, he will hate the other; if he cleave to the one, he will deſpiſe the other: ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, Matth. 6. 24. *If* (ſaies *Samuel*) *you wil prepare your hearts to ſeek the Lord, put away your Idols*, 1 Sam. 7. 3. Thoſe muſt firſt be removed, if God be received: there is no halting betwixt two: no man can be in the firſt and ſecond *Adam* together: the ſoul cannot be married to two husbands at once. The concluſion of our Savior is pregnant and peremptory *Luk* 14. 26. *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, wife and children and friends* (and therefore much more his ſins) in compariſon of Chriſt, *he cannot be my diſciple*, he is not worthy, *i. e.* not fit to be Chriſts diſciple.

Reaſ. 2. *Without this there is no ſalvation can be expected from Chriſt*; for this is the method of mercy, the order of God in the diſpenſation of life to loſt man, and ſo it was intended and appointed, *God ſent his ſon from heaven to bleſs you by turning every one of you from his iniquity* Acts 3. 26. He wil turn you from your evil way if ever he bleſs you; and it was the way the prophet preſcribed of old. *Ezek.* 18. 30. *turn you from al your tranſgreſſions ſo iniquity ſhal not be your ruin, and Chriſt came to ſave his people from their ſins. Matth.* 1. 21.

21. that is the first step to Salvation, you cannot be safe if your sins be safe, Christ wil not save you and your sins too, if you wil save them he wil not save you; this is the great condemnation that light is come into the world and men love darkness more than light, he that loves his sins, loves his death. 591

Sin is the onely enemy of the soul, that which is hateful to God and man and makes us hateful also. And therefore is the fittest, yea indeed the onely proper object of our hatred. *They are lusts that fight against the soul* 1 Pet. 2. 11. there is nothing in the world that could prejudice the peace & comfort of the soul, were it not poysoned with sin; *blessed are ye when men persecute you and hate you and speak al manner of evil of you falsly.* Math. 5. 12. could men speak al evil and do al evil against us and let us do that wich is sinful to deserve it, these cannot hinder our blessedness but encrease it. *Reas.* 3. *Reader observe here*

Matter of bitter COMPLAINT *to see how few there be in the world who ever knew what this hatred of sin meant.* And therefore yet were never accquainted with any sound broken heartedness for it such as *Job* speaks of *who hide their corruptions under their tongues as a pleasant morsel, spare it and wil not forsake it.* Instead of hating their sin, they hate the word that would discover it, the Minister, that preacheth against it, the man, the Magistrate the Law that would reform it. Instead of loathing their sins, they loath the holiness of the lives, the exactness of the wayes of such who indeed set themselves most against sinful carriages, once cross them in their courses, you have stirred a hornets nest; they ruin al on heaps. *Use* 1. *Job.* 20. 1 13

This is a touch-stone of the truth of this work of contrition, whether the Lord have left the mighty impression of this preparative frame upon the soul of a sinner. That the league betwixt the heart and our lusts is dissolved, not alone reform the practice, refrayn the commission *Use* 2.

miſſion of evil, nor yet to avoyd, and go aſide from the occaſion that may lead to it under ſome preſent pang, but thou haſt put off the love of ſining, (why bleſſed be God) the combination is come to naught; ſorrow hath looſened the knot and union betwixt thy ſoul and thy darling diſtemper. This hatred breaks the knot and union fully, thou art now divorced from thy former lovers, thou feareſt the approach of them, rather chooſeſt to ſee the blood of them, than to enjoy the preſence of them. Stay but Gods time, and be perſwaded, in his beſt ſeaſon he wil take thee into the boſom of his love, which wil be better than life it ſelf to thee. Thou art in the hand of Jeſus and under his charge, he that hath reſcued thee from the rage of the Devils, and from the right that ſin ever claymed in thee, he wil never looſe his labor, nor ſhalt thou looſe thy comfort and happineſs in the iſſue. He hath *bound the ſtrong man* the ſtrongeſt of thy corruptions that heretofore have too much, and too eaſily prevayled with thee: had got thy affection, and the *ſtrong holds* of thy heart, thoſe ſtrong temptations and allurements by which Satan, as by ſo many garriſon ſouldiers, maintayned poſſeſſion in thy ſoul; yet now this ſtrong man is bound, his holds battered and his garriſon abandoned. So that there is *a ſpoyl made of al his goods*; the temptations that formerly found entertainment, they are now abhorred, his ſuggeſtions & deluſions that found eaſy entertance & acceptance are now loathed, and thy heart ſet againſt them; the Lord Chriſt is now about to own thee as his proper poſſeſſion, and then he wil never part with thee more, thy heart trembles at the leaſt inkling of the return of thy diſtempers, ſeeks the deſtruction, and would ſee the not being; art a weary of life meerly becauſe they live, and art reſolved never to entertayn terms of peace with them, though thou never ſeeſt quiet day in the world. Know the work is the Lord Chriſts he wil own it; it's true and thorough, he wil never leave it, until he have

Luk. 11. 12.

brought

brought it to perfection and thy soul to eternal happines but alas this truth as a touchstone shewes the contrition of most in the world to be counterfeit, that many have been in the fire heated but never melted, as with mettal the parts of it battered, but never severed fully, the dross from the oar, and therefore there can never vessel be be made for any honorable use, and service thereof. In a word, the doctrine passeth sentence of sad condemnation upon four sorts of persons as such who never shaged in the work, we shal point very briefly at the particulars, that each man may take his portion. 543

First the CARELES *and fearless Christian is cast out of the number of these contrite sinners whom God doth prepare for his Christ and mercy,* such as walk heedlesly up and down the world, not awed with any watchful fear of the temptations and occasions and snares which are layd in their way to entrap them, or with the treachery and deceivable lusts which suddenly draw them aside, to common neglect of duties which they reform not, or transport and carry them with pangs of passions and distempers, and they amend not; certainly either these know not these to be sins, or else do not know them and hate them as direful and dreadful enemies to their souls; It could not be but their hearts should shake at the sight of them, and the dangerous assaults which they cannot but know, if they know them to be enemies, but they wil hazard their everlasting happiness. People who live without watch or fear they have no enemies, or no war at hand, and if thou livest in this Laish-like fearless fashion, thou never knewest the war of a Christian, nor the enemies they have, nor art in the condition of a Christian, nor hast the heart of a Christian to this hour within thee; And therefore *Jude* so describes those Atheists *and sensual* wretches, *who were destitute of Gods spirit, which are spots in your feasts, feeding themselves without fear,* Jude. 22 these are blaynes in the body of the Church, spots in 1.

the Assemblies of Christians, speak without fear in the companies where they converse, walk without fear in families where they live, walk without fear in the occasions with which they have to deal, and the Apostle adds, they *are withered, twice dead and plucked up by the roots*, far enough from having any spiritual life or any preparation, thereunto, look as in nature, reason teacheth and experience evidenceth, if there were a malicious enemy with a puissant and mighty armie now making his approaches to the City, and attempting the siege, if the allarum should be given by the watch to the City, a messenger dispatched to each mans dore, if any were so careless that he would not attend; or attending the allarum stirred not, or happily for fashion stirring, if yet he labored not by a watchful fear to provide for the assault, and attend the word of command, repayr to the place for defence of the City; there is no man but would conclude, certainly he is a party, he is not an enemy to the army that doth beneeg, every loyal and faithful subject shakes at the apprehension of the power and rage of the adversary, who is now likely to make havock of al and that without mercy, so it is here, the violence of temptation from without, and the strength of corruptions from within, fight against the soul, thou that art a disobedient child, a rebellious self-willy servant, a perverse and froward wife, an ignorant, unprofitable hearer, the allarum is given in publick, concerning these armyes of lusts that are come out against thee, notice given in private, thy fellow servants counsel, the master he commands, nay confessions are made of thy evils when thou resists, petitions put up for Grace before thou goest abroad, and yet no sooner off thy knees out of the presence of the Lord, but thou art as though thou hadst never known any such thing, thou stumblest at the same stone, taken aside with the same temptations and distempers, as though thou hadst never heard thy sin discovered, as though thou hadst never been counselled,

never

never been commanded, as though thou hadst never bewayled it to this day, idle and stubborn and perverse and way-ward and self-willie, so farr from fearing these evils, that thou didst not remember them, or think of them or if thou didst, thou feareſt rather thou shouldest be forced to reform them, rather than thou shouldst commit them). As sure as the Lord lives thou art a party and in league with these distempers, thou art not an enemy; if ever thou hadst found the venom and poyson of these corruptions and hadst been perswaded of the destroying nature of these spiritual plagues, which make havock of thy soul, the very appearance and apprehension of these would have been dreadful if there were but a roving thought in a mans mind, any final stirring of a distemper in a mans heart, any temptation, any the least enticement to the committing of the evil, how would thy heart shake at the sight of it, fear & fly & cry for help against it, if thou hadst known it and hated it as thy deadly enemy, so *Paul* cries out as fearful men do, when he perceived the stirrings of those noysom distempers of his heart, the law of the flesh, how to avoyd or prevent or overbear he could not tel, he cryes out *Oh Miserable man that I am who shal deliver me from this body of death?* Rom. 7. last. The want of this is the cause of al that heedlesness and adventurousness in mens carriages, that they are so commonly taken aside with their distempers before they scant tel where they are. For I appeal to any mans Conscience, nay to common sence, whether it is possible or no (and let any man make work of it) that a city who hath the enemy surrounding should not remember it is besiedged? that cannons should now be playing and battering, and the people within not think that they are assaulted? unless either they know not what war means, or else they joyn with the enemies in it; So it is here, when a mans mind is plotting how to act, his heart stirrs, and his corruption boyling and bubling in

his bosom, that the allarum is given, the Philistins are upon thee, sins and devils are upon thee, and yet a man forgets the condition he is in, forgets what he is commanded, counselled, admonished; this in *Prov.* 13. 13 is given as a note of destruction, *he that despiseth the command shal dye*, and tha'ts contrary to fearing a command mentioned before &c.

2. *A second sort are* NEUTERS *in religion who care not much which end goes forward, provided they might go on quietly in their way*, they would be of no side if they could be safe so, Much they would not do against sin, onely that which is grossly vile they could wish might be reformed. They wil no great matter for religion, onely they could wish that this rigor and strictness might not be pressed, because in both these extreams they conceive there is trouble. Oh peace is a precious thing, this wretched politician would have peace with sin, peace with Christ, and peace with ordinances, peace with drunkards and prophane wretches, and peace with such as walk exactly before God. His motto that writ upon his dore, and that his measure, *every mans good word*, love of all men, so in truth he loves neither God nor men, nor his own soul in the conclusion, but our saviors determination is definitive and peremtory, *he that is not with me, is against me, and he that gathers not, scatters*, nay James. 4. 4 *he that will be a friend to the world is an enemy to God*. Moderation and discretion is the compass by which this man steers, it is not *men and brethren what shal we do?* but rather *what shal we do?* of little medling comes much ease, if he may have that, he hath his end, to be at war with his enemies is a wearisom life, the temper of his zeal is like the warmth of his bed, not as hot as fire that would scorch him, nor yet so cold as fire as would chil him but just so warm as he may sleep in it. As neutral Cities in time of war they pay to both sides because they would have war with neither, with the sincere

sincere and upright he wil seem as they are, and with the ungodly he wil be and do as they: Gallio-like *he cares for none of those matters*, if he may have his own matters if any thing appertaining to sin or godliness, he wil not trouble himself further than his own ease, and profit are interested in it; he wil do nothing against his sin, and he is like to have nothing at the hand of the Lord, for he loaths and hates him that never loathed nor hated his corruption, he wil vomit with indignation such luk-warm varlets out of his mouth, Rev. 3. 597

The third sort is your LAZY HYPOCRITE *Who wil be abundant in his purposes and professions against his sin, smoaks out his dayes in powerless & pithless resolutions, wishings & wouldings but doth nothing to purpose*, sets not himself in a restless pursuit against his evil. Hatred where it is settled and through it carryes al a mans endeavors with it, calls a man into the field, when *Hanum saw he was hated of* David, *he gathers al his forces for offence and defence, and hyres besides.* War amongst enemies requires the whol man, with his time and strength, he that goes to war doth not entangle himself, but leaves al his occasions, that might attend the enemy, he spies privily where his haunts are, what advantages he may take, where his holds are to demolish them, where his provision comes, to intercept it, and to cut of his convoy, levies what forces he may and sends far off for succor and supply. When the Lazy hypocrite makes his complaints against his distempers, and rests in his complaints, bewayles his wretchedness and corruptions, but to a resolved war he wil not go. You wil do nothing upon poynt against those lusts, that have done so much evil against Christ and your own soul, Is not the day yet to dawn, the time yet to come, that ever you set your selves in earnest in battle array against your evils *Luk.* 13. 24. a sleepy kind of seeking that many do which shal never enter into grace, many *shal seek to enter and shal not be able*, but *to strive* to 3. 2 *Sam.* 10. 6.

rule

rise up against your corruptions and to maintain professed war against your sin that you do not that you wil not do, how many directions have you heard and yet attend not counsels and follow not, means and wayes have been presented and pressed and you improve none of them? have you ever *searched and tryed your own wayes*, that you might see the haunts of your hearts and prevent them? have you observed where the strong holds of sin and satan are, high thoughts and self conceitednes and labor to raze them, where the *Provisions* have been made by musings and meditations that so you might stop and stifle those thoughts and so starve and famish your lusts? have you cast your self into the holy communion of the Saints that you might levy new forces or counsels and directions? have you sent to heaven and pursued God with importunate entreaties, for to send in succor and support, against those abominations which are too many and too strong for you? your endeavor is not thorough, your hatred therefore is not found.

Lam. 3. 40.

Rom. 13 *last.*

4. *The fourth sort is your* TREACHEROUS HYPOCRITE *Who pretends great indignation against his sins, that he may keep them and that without suspicion*, as such who are the receivers of theeves, they cannot hide them in their own houses, unless they make hue-and-cry after them in other places. The adulterous woman rayles against her mate in the view and hearing of others that she may meet him in secret when no man may mistrust him or her; there are spies and Satans intelligencers that hold privie correspondence with their corruptions while they profess greatest opposition against them; As *Hushai*, *Davids* friend he pretended service to *Absalom*, that he might serve *David*, discover and defeat the counsel of *Achitophel* and *Absaloms* proceedings, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. 4. 5. So here; they cannot *devour widdowes houses, unless they make long prayers*, so they *Isai.* 58. 2. 3. *they fast and pray* against

against their sins, that they may more freely commit them, not that they may please God, but *that they may do their own pleasure*; they can do any thing against counsel, they quarrel at it, against the power of a reproof, they endeavor to defeat it, against the evidence of Conviction, they strive to darken it, and cavil at it, sees how the Coast is, gives intelligence to his distempers; this and that Argument is alleaged, deviseth how to answer it; this reproof is administred, devises how to defeat it. As *Rahab* sent the men of the City upon a sleeveless Errand, *Josh.* 2. 5. Pursue after them quickly, and you shal overtake them, when she had brought them up, and hid them in her House-top. So it is also with Conspirators and receivers of Traitors; if they can lead the Officer or Searcher into some by place, they wil be as eager and earnest to follow things to the utmost; but come home once to their own houses where the Traitor is indeed, if they cannot hide them, rather than they shall do execution, they wil defend them, but not deliver them up into the hands of the Officer. How often and ordinary is it to every mans experience to cry out of pride and stubbornness, carnal confidence that is in their hearts, and that truly and justly, the stumps of that Dagon remains, the body of death yet continues, those lustings of the old man, but bring it home to their own doors, let it concern them in their particular occasions, in any controversie between man and man, where the fault is to be found, and the blame to be laid, sin to be confessed, that these distempers are to be attached in their hands, they wil do any thing against Arguments and the evidence of Reason, but nothing against their sins; such are they, *John*, 6. 60. *That sought Christ for Loaves, &c.* If Christ wil be their Cook, he shall be their King. But if they press them beyond their pace, and discover their falsness, and how far short they fall of the Spiritual work of Faith in Christ, they fall out hand-smooth; *It's a hard saying, who can hear it?*

And

And thoſe *Diſſemblers*, Jer. 43. 2. when the Prophet did but croſs them in their courſes, would have plucked the carnal corrupt deſires from their heart; they fly in his face, and profeſs they wil die in the quarrel, they hate not their ſin, but the Ordinance that would diſcover their ſins, they would not deſtroy their ſins, but the evidence of Reaſon that would condemn their ſins.

So much for deteſtation of ſin.

The Second part of Doctr.

The Second Particular to be conſidered in the Doctrine is a SEQUESTRATION FROM SIN. It is a word common among thoſe that attend upon the Law, when men are at a controverſie about Goods and Land. and the Cauſe is depending, the Goods or Land is ſequeſtred, ſet aſide and put into the power of any parties, but ſet aſide til the caſe be decided. So under this preparative work the ſoul is ſequeſtred from ſin: when God hath made a man ſee ſin, and willing to hate it, the ſoul and ſin are at controverſie, the ſoul revolts from under the Authority of ſin, and ſaith ſin is not my Ruler, I cannot rule my ſelf, and ſin ſhal not rule me; it was by uſurpation that it hath had ſo long poſſeſſion of me, but it ſhal not domineer in my ſoul any longer: and therefore the poor diſtreſſed ſinner is glad that Chriſt is ſtirring in the word, and ſaith he, I am reſolved never to yield to the Authority of ſin more, I wil ſue out a ſequeſtration, and Oh that my heart may be left in the hand of the Spirit of Chriſt. I was not made for ſin, but for God, Oh that I may be delivered from my ſin, that I may come at God again, and now he is content that God would fling him into Hell. So he would free him from his ſins, *Hoſ.* 14. 8. *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I to do any more with Idols?* Rom. 11. 24. The ſoul is now as a graft cut off from the Stock of old *Adam*, it grows not to it, nor is fed by it any more.

This Sequeſtration diſcovers it ſelf by two Acts,

1 *There is no allurement can entice the ſoul.*

2 *No evils that can drive the ſoul to its former ſin.*

Firſt,

First, *Nothing can entice the soul to former sins*, no allurements can prevayl with him, no thoughts of former delights or future pleasures can allure him to fal in with his old corruptions. The bait is pleasant, but (sayes he) I know the hook, I'le none of that bait, I know the cup and the guilt, but I know the poyson also, he wil *never return again to folly*, he resolves never to see the faces of his sins more.

No present evils, miseries, necessities wil drive the soul to entertain former distempers, he hath found sin worse than these, better to be in chaynes, than in the chains of darkness: fire and faggot thats wild-fire, but he hath felt hel-fire, and chooseth rather to fear the frowns of a God rather than the threatnings of al the men in the world. And Hence the face of the soul is towards God and as *Jeremiah besought the King that he might not return to the dungeon again to dye there*, So it is with a broken hearted sinner, tis his great request unto God that he may not go back again to his sins. In this sequestration from sin the soul sits as a widdow, &c.

We here see the reason of al those revolts and backslidings of such as promised better things, the Adulterer to his Queans, the Drunkard to his Cupps, and the Covetous man to the world after twenty years profession they are the same men they were, they return to their former follyes, and are as bad as ever. *These men were never cut off from their corruptions, the union was there stil*, the soul was in league and love with sin stil, and therefore it prevails again. they would not have their wounds throughly lanced that they might be healed, and therefore they festered, and grow worse and worse many years after. If thou hast a privy lust harbored in thy heart that wil be thy ruin, thou wilt be as bad or worse than ever.

EXHORTATION, *To provoke all our endeavors to see a necessity of it, and to seek to heaven that*

2.

Use 1.

God may work it in us, let this be alwayes in thy prayers, Lord that I may hate my sin, that I may put off the love of sinning whatever thou hatest, sin is worse than that, its worse than reproach, disgrace, sickness, poverty; thy love to sin should be turned into hatred, and thy hatred to it, should be greater than ever thy love hath been. And if thou dost not hate thy sin, its certain the God of Heaven will hate thee, *the froward in heart is an abomination to the Lord*, Prove. 3. 32. Thou thy self art an abomination to the Lord, if thy sin be not an abomination to thee.

If thou wilt part with thy sins the Lord will set his love upon thee, *Jer.* 3. 1. *though thou hast done evil things as thou couldest, yet return unto me.* It's said *Judg.* 10. 15. 16. when the people of Israel came bewailing their sins, crying for mercy, and putting away their Gods, that then *the soul of the Lord was grieved for the misery of Israel*, and he had mercy on them. He is the same God still, and if he sees thee grieving for thy sins, he will grieve for thy sorrowes. When *Ephraim bemoaning himself*, judging himself for his sin, and crying out unto the Lord, turn me, and I shall be turned, its said, *he heard Ephraim bemoaning himself*, and his bowels were troubled for him, and I do earnestly remember him still, *I will surely have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord.* Jer. 31. 18. 19. 20.

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FINIS.

The Names of ſeveral Books Printed by Peter Cole *in Leaden-Hall,* London, *and are to be ſold at his Shop at the ſign of the Printing-preſs in Cornhil, neer the Exchange.*

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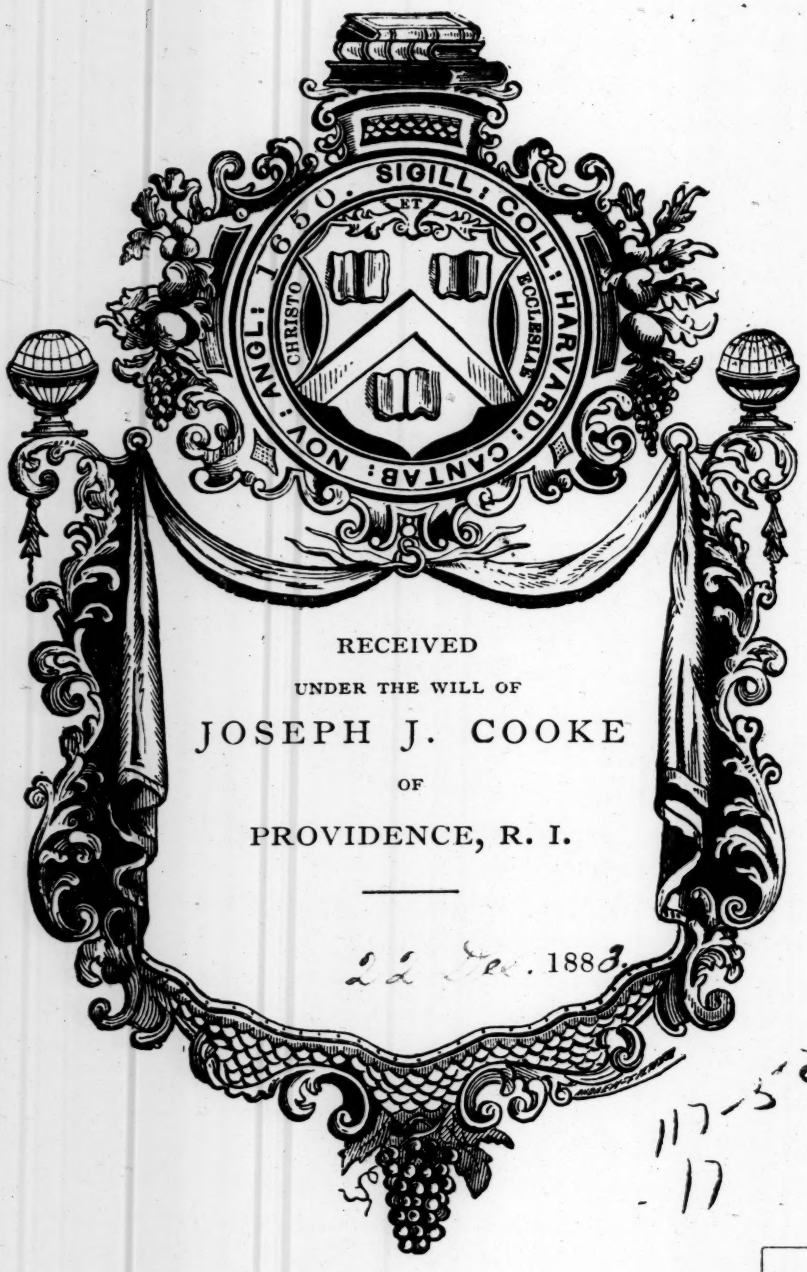
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1883, Sec. 22.
Cooke report.

To the Reader.

READER.

IT hath been one of the Glories of the *Proteſtant Religion*, that it revived the Doctrine of *Saving Converſion*, And of the *new creature* brought forth thereby. Concerning which, and the neceſsity thereof, we find ſo much indigitated by Chriſt and the *Apoſtles* (in their Epiſtles) in thoſe times: But in a more eminent manner, God hath caſt the honor hereof upon the Miniſters and Preachers of this Nation, who are renowned abroad for their more accurate ſearch into, and diſcoveries hereof.

Firſt, For the *Popiſh Religion*, that much pretend to *Piety* and *Devotion*, and doth

dreſs forth a *Religion*, to a great outward Gaudineſs, and *ſhew* of *Humility* and *wil-worſhip*, which (we confeſs) is entermingled with many ſpiritual ſtrains of *ſelf-denial*, *Submiſſion to Gods wil*, *Love to God* and *Chriſt*, eſpecially in the writings of thoſe that are called *Miſtical Divines*. But that firſt great and *ſaving Work of Converſion*; which is the foundation of al true *piety*, the great and numerous volumns of their moſt devout writers are uſually ſilent therein. Yea they eminently appropriate the *word Converſion* and *thing* it ſelf, unto a man that *renounceth* a *Secular life*, and entereth into *Religious orders* (as they cal them) and that *Doctrine* they have in their diſcourſes of *Grace* and *free wil* about it, is of no higher elevation, than what (as worthy Mr *Perkins* long ſince) may be *common to a Reprobate*; though we judg not al amongſt them. God having continued in the midſt of Popiſh Darkneſs many to this day, and at this day with more Contention than ever

The Dominicans, and Janſenius of late and his followers.

ever, that plead for the *Prerogative of Gods Grace in mans Converſion.*

And for the *Arminian* Doctrine, how low doth that run in this great Article? this we may without breach of Charity ſay of it; That if they or their followers have no further or deeper work upon their hearts, than what their Doctrine in that point calls for; they would fal ſhort of Heaven: though thoſe other great truths they together therewith teach, God may and doth favingly bleſs unto true Converſion, he breaking through thoſe Errors into ſome of their hearts.

And how much our *reformed Writers abroad*, living in continual wranglings and Diſputes with the *Adverſaries of Grace*, have omitted in a *Practical* and *Experimental* way, to lay open and anatomize the *inwards* of this *great work*, for the Comfort and ſettlement, of poor ſouls, many of themſelves do greatly bewayl: And to find them work, and divert them from this, it hath been the

Devils great Policy (who is at the head of all those Controversies) as also ever since *Pelagius* time, to this very day) to make that dry and barren plot of Ground (namely *the naked dispute of the freedom of mans wil*) to be the great seat of this War (as the Pope did the Conquest of the Holy Land, in the darker times, to find al Christian Princes work) and thither to draw al the forces and intentions of mens minds jejunely & in a great part *Phylosophically* to debate *what power mans wil* (for-sooth) hath in the *Summity* and Apex of *Conversion* to *resist* or to *accept* the Grace of God: and so whether *Moral perswasions* only be not *Sufficient*? or that *Physical Pre-determinations* be not also requisite to *Conversion*? whilest in the mean time, al *those intimate actings* of a soul in turning to God; *The secret particular passages*, both on *Gods part*, and on the *souls part* (which are many and various) by which the soul is won over unto God and Christ; *those treaties* the souls of men

men hold with God and Chriſt for juſtifying and Sanctifying Grace, and for union with him: theſe have been forgotten, or but overly and ſlightly touched upon, which if our reformed Divines would have made it their work diſtinctly to have inſiſted on, out of the ſcripture and their own experience: *that Glory* would have appear'd therein, which would have put a period unto al thoſe janglings about Free-Wil.

And further to take a ſerious ſurvey of the preſent times in this Nation; the *temper of Profeſſors* is ſuch, that it cannot enough be Lamented: Ordinarily men enter into and take up a profeſsion of Religion and that with difference from others, upon very cheap Rates. And do *give* and *receive* Honor of being ſuch *to* and *from* one another upon ſo ſlender grounds; that we with grief ſay, there hath been *more of Profeſsion* in theſe changes, when *leſs of Regeneration.*

The *Cauſes* whereof are more than

of

of one ſort, or than which we are able to enumerate. Yet for inſtance; *Either* becauſe God hath in the Courſe of his providence involved the *Cauſe of Religion*, and the *Vindication* of *the liberties* of the *ſincere Profeſſors* of it, (formerly ſo much oppreſſed) with ſo high an hand, and out-ſtreched Arm; ſo apparently, that therefore *Carnal men* have fallen in, and mingled themſelves (as that mixt multitude of *Egyptians* who came forth of Egyptian bondage with the Iſraelites) and joyned iſſu therewith, and *Learning* a little to ſpeak the *Iſraelitiſh Language*, and give Religion, and good men good words; and being for the *Common Cauſe*, (as they cal it) they have thereby put themſelves and been received into the Common *Roll* of men *wel affected in Religion*, as wel as *to the publique*.

Or elſe (which we cannot but judge and mention as another Cauſe hereof) it hath been profeſſedly held forth (by men holy and ſpiritual) that *all* that

are

are *not Scandalous in their Lives*, and that have and profeſs the *form of truth*, in their *knowledg* by education, and do ad thereunto ſome *Holy Duties* (ſuch perſons, we mean, as formerly were in our Pulpits plainly tearmed but *Civil or Moral Chriſtians*, and are but ſuch kind of *Profeſſors of Chriſtianity*, as *Mutatis mutandis*, are found among Turks of *Mahumataniſme*, who know and underſtand the Principles of that Religion & devout in the Duties required thereby, through the meer efficacy of Education, Laws, and Cuſtoms: Being alſo through moral Honeſty, (not ſcandalous in their Lives) Such Perſons, and that upon a new Reformation of Religion, Have been with ſeparation from others (the *Ignorant* and *Prophane*) pleaded for, and received into the Communion of Saints, as *viſible Saints*. which principle and practice Hath (as it muſt needs) weakened and embaſed The Antient, purer ſtamp of the Doctrine of *Converſion* both by encouraging

ing

ſuch men Boldly to take upon them to be ſuch authoriſed thereby; as alſo by having checked and flatted the ſpirits of them that would teach it: Seeing that the real application of this in practiſe and principle, to ſuch perſons, is a manifeſt Contradiction to al that can be Doctrinally ſaid in the Pulpit to the Contrary, about the power of it. And thus the Profeſsion of Religion hath been Levelled, and Diffuſed unto that Bulk, & commonneſs of *Profeſſors*, That *the True marks* of ſaving Graces are (as to the open diſcerning) much worn out and in danger to be wholly loſt, if this ſhould obtayn.

Or elſe (which indeed is as great a Cauſe as any other) *A ſpecial profeſſion of Religion* being in *Mode* and under Countenance, many mens minds have been eaſily moved to ſee what there might be in it; and ſo to attend to what is ſaid about it more than formerly; and upon attending and liſtening thereunto, their ſpirits have been awakened, and

are *not ſcandalous in their lives, having in their Knowledg, the Form of Truth,* by Education; adding thereunto ſome *outward holy Duties.* Such Perſons we mean, as formerly were in our Pulpits, plainly tearmed, but *Civil, Moral Chriſtians* (and are really but ſuch kind of *Profeſſors* of *Chriſtianity*, as *Mutatis mutandis*, are found among Turks of *Mahumotaniſm*; who underſtand the Principles of *that Religion,* and are devout in *Duties to God,* required thereby, through the meer efficacy of *Natural Devotion,* and *Education,* the *Laws* and *Cuſtoms* of that Religion; who alſo through *Moral Honeſty,* are not ſcandalous in their Lives.) Such like Perſons amongſt us, have been, and that as a *New Reformation of Religion,* with *ſeparation* alſo from others (the *Ignorant* and *Prophane*) profeſſedly received into the *Communion of Saints*, as *viſible Saints. This* Principle, and Practice, hath (as it muſt needs) weakened and embaſed the antient purer ſtamp of the Doctrine of *Converſion* (as *then* held forth with ſuch evidence

evidence of difference from these mens Profession) not only by encouraging such boldly to take on them to be *Saints* (as it were) by *Authority*; but also by having checked, and flatted the spirits of themselves that would *teach it*, seeing that this *Real Application* in *Practice*, and *Principle*, to such *Moral Christians* as *Saints*, is a manifest *Contradictirn* unto al that can be *Doctrinally* said in the Pulpit to the contrary, concerning the *power* of this great work in *true Saints*. And *thus* the *Profession* of *Religion* hath been levelled, and diffused into that *bulk* and *commonness*, that the *true marks* of saving Graces, are (as to the open discerning) much worn out, and wil be more and more, if this should obtain.

Or else (as great a Cause as any other) *a special Profession of Religion* being in *Mode*, and under Countenance: Hence many have been easily moved to see what might be in *Religion*, and so attend to what is said about it; and upon listening thereto, their spirits have been awakened,

wakened, and ſurprized with ſome light; and then with that Light they have grown inquiſitive into what *this* or *that* Party of *Religion* holds; what the *other*, or what a *fourth*. And thinking themſelves at liberty (as the Principle of the times is) to chuſe (as men in a Market) what that Light wil lead them to; they accordingly fal in, either with *this*, or *that* particular perſwaſion: and this is al of many mens *Converſion*. And yet becauſe ſuch become zealouſly addicted to *ſuch*, or *ſuch a way* (ſome of the Profeſſors of each of which, others that differ, own as truly Godly) therfore they are preſently *adopted*, & owned *as Saints*, by the ſeveral Followers of ſuch Opinions: And each ſort thinks much, that thoſe who embrace *their Opinion*, ſhould not be accounted, and eſteemed *Religious* by all others, that do ſincerely profeſſe the power of it. Thus men *Tythe Mint and Cummin*, and leap over the *great things of Regeneration*, namely, *Humiliation for ſin*, the *through ſence of their Na-*

tural Condition, the *Difficult work of Faith*, to justifie them, *Union* and *Closing* with Christ, *Mortification of lusts*, &c. which works where they are found, and visibly held forth, none are to be disowned for other Opinions consisting with the Foundation; yet so, as without these, no Opinion, of what Elevation soever, can, or doth constitute a man Religious.

Now look, as when among the Jews, *Religion* had run into Factions, and Parties, and the power of it thereby, was wel-nigh lost; God then set down *John Baptist* amongst them, a sowr and severe Preacher, & Urger of the *Doctrine of Repentance*, and preparative Humiliation for sin (which he comparatively to what was brought in by Christ, termeth the *Baptism of Water*) though withal 'tis said, that in the Close of his Doctrine, he pointed unto Christ; *Saying unto the people, that they should beleeve on him that should come after him*; that is, *on Jesus Christ* Yet this he did but point at: for the ful

stream

and ſurprized with ſome light, And then with that light, they have grown inquiſitive into what *this* or *that* party of *Religion* holds ; what the *other* or what a *fourth*. And thinking themſelves at liberty (as the Principle of of the times is) to chuſe (as men in a market) what that light wil lead them to ; they accordingly fal in either with *this* or *that* particular perſwaſion : and this is all of many mens *converſion*. And yet becauſe ſuch become zealouſly addicted to ſuch or ſuch a way (as hath the name of *a Religion* in it when being profeſſed by ſuch as their brethren, men dare not reject as ungodly) therefore they are preſently *adopted* and owned by the ſeveral followers of ſuch Opinions: And each ſort thinks much, that they are not for ſiding with or imbraceing them, accounted and eſteemed *Religious* by all others alſo that do ſincerely profeſs the power of it. Thus men *Tyth Mint and Cumin*, and leap over the *great things of Regeneration*, namely *Humilia-*

tion for ſin, the *through ſence of their Natural condition*, the *Difficult work of Faith*, to juſtify them, *union* and *Cloſing* with Chriſt, *Mortification of luſts, &c.* which works where they are found and viſibly held forth, none are to be diſowned for other opinions conſiſting with the foundation, yet ſo as without theſe no opinion of what Elevation ſoever can or doth conſtitute a man Religious.

Now look as when among the Jews, *Religion* had run into factions and parties, and the power of it thereby was wel-nigh loſt; God then ſet down *John Baptiſt* a ſour and ſevere Preacher, and Urger of the *Doctrine of Repentance*, and preparative Humiliation for ſin, (which he Comparitively to what was brought in by Chriſt, tearmeth the Baptiſme of water) though with all, tis ſaid, that in the Cloſe of his Doctrine he pointed unto Chriſt; ſaying unto the People. *That they ſhould believe on him that ſhould come after him*, that is, *on Jeſus Chriſt.* Yet this he did but point at: for the ful

Acts, 19

ſtream

ſtream of his Diſpenſation ran in that other Channel. Of whoſe Miniſtry it is alſo ſaid *Luk.* 1. 16. 17. *That many of the Children of Iſrael ſhould be turn to the Lord, their God. And ſhal go before him* (namely Chriſt) *in the ſpirit and power of* Elias *to turn the hearts of the Fathers to their Children, and the Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the juſt to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* The meaning whereof is, he came to reſtore the Doctrine of ſaving Converſion, and in that point to bring and reduce the Children of the Jews back again unto the ſame Principles and wayes (neceſſary to Salvation) by which the Fathers, and all the renowned Saints of the old Teſtament had been brought in unto God. And ſo by that means to become of the ſame Religion (ſaving Converſion being the alone practick Foundation and Centre of all Religion) that the Godly Jews of old were of. So what know we, but that God (in ſome leſſer, proportionate correſpondency, both in reſpect of

perſons and times) may have had this in the eye of all wiſely deſigning Providence to ſet out *this great Authors works* and writings (amongſt the labors of others alſo) upon this very Argument, to bring back, and correct the Errors of the ſpirits of Profeſſors of theſe times (and perhaps by urging too far, and inſiſting too much upon that as *Preparatory*, which includes indeed the beginnings of true *Faith*, (And a man may be held too long *under John* Baptiſts *water*) To rectify thoſe that have ſlipt into *Profeſſion*, and Leapt over all both *true* and *deep Humiliation* for ſin, and *ſence of their natural Condition*; yea and many over Chriſt himſelf too, profeſsing to go to God without him. However, this we may ſay (without diminution to any other or detraction from the Authors himſelf, in reſpect of his more rayſed knowledg of Chriſt and Gods free Grace) That if any of our late Preachers and Divines came in the *Spirit and power of John Baptiſt* this man did.

This

This deeply humbled man, and as highly raiſed, both in Faith and Communion with Chriſt, the Author of theſe Treatiſes. He had been trained up from his Youth, in the Experience and Tryal of Gods Diſpenſations and Workings this way; and verſ'd in digging into the Mines and Veins of Holy Scriptures, to find how they agreed with his own Experiments. His Soul had traverſed the intricate Meanders, and the darkened (through temptations) windings of this narrow paſſage and entrance into Life (*and few there be that find it.*) And by deep reflections upon every ſtep of Gods Procedure with himſelf, hath deſcried thoſe falſe and crooked by-waies, which at every ſtep, *darkened man* (who *errs in his heart, not having the knowledg of Gods waies*) is apt to go aſtray when they have but inferior workings of the Spirit on them, from the way of Life, which only thoſe do find that are un-erringly *guided* by the Holy Spirit (peculiar to the Elect) *into the waies of Peace.* And

And whereas there hath been publiſhed long ſince, many Parts and Pieces of this Author, upon this Argument, Sermon-wiſe preach'd by him here in *England* (which in the preaching of them did enlighten all thoſe Parts) Yet having been taken by an unskilful hand, which upon his receſs into thoſe remoter parts of the World, was bold without his privity or conſent to print and publiſh them (one of the greateſt injuries which can be done to any man) it came to paſs his genuine meaning, and this in points of ſo high a Nature, and in ſome things differing from the Common Opinion, was diverted in thoſe printed Sermons from the fair and cleer draught of his own Notions and Intentions, becauſe ſo utterly deformed and miſ-repreſented in multitudes of paſſages; And in the reſt but imperfectly and crudely ſet forth.

Here, in theſe Treatiſes, thou *haſt* his Heart from his *own Hand*, his own Thoughts drawn by his own Penſil.

This

This is all truly and purely his own, not as preached only, but as *written by himself* in order to the Preſs; which may be a great ſatisfaction to all that honored and loved him (as who that was good, and knew him, did not?) eſpecially thoſe that received benefit by thoſe other imperfect Editions. And we cannot but look at it as a bleſſed Providence of God, that the publiſhing of the ſame by others (in that manner that hath been mentioned) ſhould have provoked him, and that by the excitation of the Church (whereof he was the Paſtor in *New-England*) to go over again the ſame Materials in the Courſe of his Miniſtry amongſt them, in order to the perfecting of it by his own hand for publick Light, thereby to vindicate both himſelf and it from that wrong which otherwiſe had remained for ever irrecompenſible.

And hereby it came to paſs (that ſo far as he hath proceeded) this Subject came to have a *third Concoction* in the Heart

Heart and Head of him that was one of the most experienced Christians, and of acutest Abilities that have been living in our Age. He *Preach'd* more briefly of this Subject *first*, whilst he was *Fellow* and *Chatechist* in *Emanuel Colledg* in *Cambridg*. The Notes of which, were then so esteemed, that many Copies thereof, were by many that heard not the Sermons, written out, and are yet extant by them. And then again, a *Second time*, many yeers after, more largely at *Great Chelmsford* in *Essex*; the Product of which, was those Books of Sermons that have gone under his Name. And *Last* of all; *now* in *New-England*, and that in, and to a *setled Church* of Saints, to which the Promise is made of being, *The Seat and Pillar of Truth*; and in which all Ordinances set as the Loadstone in the Steel, have the greater power and energie: In which the Presence of Christ breaks forth, and *all his Springs* are found therein.

And truly we need not wonder that God

God ſet his heart and thoughts a work ſo much, and ſo repeatedly about this Subject. We ſee that the *Holy Ghoſt* himſelf, the *Author of this Work* of *Converſion*, doth ſomtimes, and that in an eminent manner, go over the *whol of that Work* again and again in the hearts of Chriſtians, whom God means to make great in his Church: as in *Peter*, *When thou art converted &c.* who was yet converted already, And to the Diſciples, *Except ye be converted &c.* And the *coming of the Holy Ghoſt* upon them, at and after *Pentecoſt*, was as a *New Converſion* unto them, making them to differ as much *from themſelves*, in *what* they were *afore*, as well-nigh they themſelves (though afore truly wrought on) did then differ from other men. The Spirit of God himſelf goes over this Work afreſh in all the parts of it: As to *humble* anew, to *draw to Chriſt*, to *change* and raiſe *the heart* to higher ſtrains of *Holineſs*. And when ſo, then his *Second* Work excels the *Firſt*, that it *comes not*

into mind; and his *Third* the *Second*, that it *ceaſeth* (as it were) to *be remembred*; (as the Prophet in other Works of Wonder ſpeaks) for thereby he every time *Spirituallizeth* the heart ſtill *more*, *refineth* it from *Hypocriſie*, and makes it *double refined*; cauſeth the heart to come forth from each new caſt and moulding, with a deeper and fairer impreſsion of his Image and Glory. If then the *Holy Ghoſt* (*the Writer of his Law in the Heart*) ſets that high value upon that Work of his, that he vouchſafeth to take the pains to *write it over and over again* in the *ſame Tablet*; Let it be no *Diminution* to this great Author, but let us bleſs God rather for the *Providence*, that the ſame Divine Hand and Spirit ſhould ſet him this Task, to take the *Doctrine* of *this Work* into a ſecond, yea a third Review; and thereby make it as it were, the τὸ ἔργον, *the Work of his Life.*

Only thus it is, That the other *Great Points*, as *Union with Chriſt*, *Juſtification*, *Adoption*, *Sanctification*, and *Glory* (which Subjects,

Subjects, as he was able for, ſo his heart was moſt in them) he hath left unfiniſhed: And ſo thereby (as is moſt likely) multitudes of precious, yea glorious thoughts, which he might have reſerved (as often falls out to Preachers and Writers) for thoſe higher Subjects, as the Cloſe, and Centre, and Crown of what forewent, as preparative thereto, are now periſhed, and laid in the duſt with him. *None but Chriſt was ever yet able to finiſh all that Work which was in his Heart to do.* Farewel.

Thomas Goodwyn,

Philip Nye.



COLE.

1216.

The Application of Redemption, by the effectual work of the Word and Spirit of Christ, for the bringing home of lost Sinners to God.

The Ninth Book.

Isaiah, 57. 15.

Thus saith He that is the High, and the Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the High and the Holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit.

THe Work of Preparation having Two Parts:

First, The Lords manner of Dispensation as he is pleased to deal with the Soul, for the setting up the praise of his Rich and Glorious Grace: and therefore with a holy kind of Violence he plucks the Sinner

from his ſins unto himſelf, and his Chriſt. This hath been diſpatched already in the former Diſcourſe.

The Second now follows: And that is the Frame and Diſpoſition which is wrought in the Hearts of ſuch as the Lord hath purpoſed to ſave, and to whom he hath diſpenſed himſelf in that gracious Work of his.

This Diſpoſition conſiſts eſpecially in Two Things { *Contrition*, *Humiliation.*

That ſo I may follow the Phraſe of Scripture, and retain the Lords own Words in the Text, where the Lord ſaith, that he dwels with him that is *of an humble and contrite Heart.*

To omit al manner of Coherence, and other Circumſtances, we will paſs all the other Specials in the Verſe, and point at that Particular which will ſuit our proceeding, and may afford ground to the following Diſcourſe, that we may go no further than we ſee the Pillar of Fire, the Lord in his Truth to go before us. We ſhal faſten then upon the laſt words only, as thoſe that fit our Intendment.

To make way for our ſelves in ſhort, there is one word alone to be opened, that ſo the Point may be better fitted for our Application; we muſt know what it is *to dwel*, or how *God* is ſaid to *dwell in a contrite and humble heart?*

I Anſwer, To Dwell implies Three Things.

1. Firſt, That the Lord owns ſuch as thoſe in whom he hath an eſpecial intereſt, and claims a ſpecial propriety, as though he left all the reſt of man-kind to lie waſt as a Common, that the World, and the Devil, and Sin may poſſeſs, and uſe at their pleaſure, reſerving the Honor of his Juſtice, which by a ſtrong hand he will exact as a Tribute due to himſelf out of all things in Heaven and Earth, and Hell and all; but perſons whom he thus fits, he reſerves for his own ſpecial Improvement. As Princes and Perſons of place and quality, do leaſe out, and let ſome

ſome Forreſts and Commons to the Inhabitants bordering thereabout, reſerving ſome acknowledgment of Fealty and Royalty to themſelves, but the choyce and beſt Pallaces or Granges of greateſt worth, and profit, they reſerve for their own peculiar to inhabit in. So here, the Lord leaſeth out the World, and the wicked in it to the Devil and his Angels, and Inſtruments, reſerving a Royalty and Prerogative to himſelf, as that he will have his Homage and Acknowledgment of dependance upon himſelf; but his broken-hearted ones are his own for his own Improvement, *Deut.* 32. 8, 9. *When the moſt High divided to the Nations their Inheritance, and ſeparated the ſons of* Adam, *he ſet the bounds of his People according to the number of the Children of Iſrael, for the Lords Portion is his People Iſrael, the Lot of his Inheritance: Ye are the Temple of the Living God*; 2 Cor. 6. 16. Yea, to them the Lord himſelf ſaies, *Ye are my People, and they ſhall ſay, thou art my God*, Zach. 13. laſt. Therefore he profeſſeth, that though in the courſe of his Providence he goes on progreſs over all the world, yet he takes up his dwelling and abode amongſt his own People. For,

Secondly, Where a man dwels, as he owns the houſe, ſo he takes up his abode there, it is the place of his reſidence; we ſay any may know where to ſeek men, or where to find them, at home, at their own houſe: That's the difference between Inning and Dwelling; we Inn at a place in our paſſing by, when we take repaſt only, and bait, but depart preſently, intending not to ſtay; but where we dwel, we ſettle our abode, we take up our ſtand there, and ſtir no further. So the Lord is ſaid then to dwel in the Soul, when he vouchſafes the conſtant expreſſion of his peculiar preſence and aſſiſtance to the ſoul. True it is that the Lord fills Heaven and Earth with his preſence, yea, the Heaven of Heavens is not able to contain him, *Jer.* 23. 24. His infinite Being is every where, and one and the ſame every where in re- 2.

gard of himself; because his being is most simple, and not subject to any shadow of change, being all one with himself. Yet he is said to take up his abode in a special manner, when he doth put forth the peculiar expression of his Work; as in Heaven he dwels, because he puts forth the constant expression of his Glory, and that in the full brightness of it without any alteration and change. Here in this Spiritual Temple, the Souls of his Saints, he puts forth the peculiar expression of the constant assistance of his blessed Spirit. *I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever*, John 14. 16. 1 Joh. 2. 23. *Ye have received an anointing which abideth in you.*

3. Dwelling, if it be attributed to the chiefest Inhabitant and Owner of the House, it implies also the ruling and ordering of the occasions that come under hand there, the exercising of the Government of the house and family where the Owner is, and dwels. He that lodgeth at a House as a stranger, comes to an Inn as a Passenger, he takes what he finds, hath what he can receive of kindness and courtesie; but the Owner is the Commander of the House where he dwels, and the orderer of all the Affairs that appertain thereunto. So doth the Lord with a broken Heart. Thus we are said to *live in the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. And it's that which follows by Inference upon this ground, *John* 15. 4. 5. *If I abide in you, and you abide in me, you shal bring forth much fruit*; and therefore its added also in this place, that the Lord dwels in the contrite and humble heart *to receive the Spirit* of the contrite ones, they yeeld themselves to be acted by him, and they shall be acted and quickened by him to Eternal Life.

So that the full meaning is, The contrite and humble heart is such to whom the Lord vouchsafes acceptance, special presence and abode, and peculiar guidance; he owns him, abides with him, and rules in him for ever.

True,

True, it is ſaid Chriſt dwels in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. and as many as beleeve in him, they receive him, *John* 1. 12. That is done as by the next and immediate hand, by which we lay hold on Chriſt, and give entertainment to him; but unleſs the heart be broken and humbled, we cannot receive Faith, that we may receive Chriſt. *And while the ſoul is thus breaking and humbling, Faith alſo is coming* in a right ſenſe, rightly underſtood; whereof we ſhal ſpeak ſomwhat largely, if the Lord give us leave to come to that place.

The Words thus opened, the Point is the very letter of the Text, which looks full upon every Hearer or Reader that will look upon the Text.

The Heart muſt be broken and humbled, before the Lord will own it as His, take up his abode with it, and rule in it. Doct.

There muſt be Contrition and Humiliation before the Lord comes to take poſſeſſion; the Houſe muſt be aired and fitted before it comes to be inhabited, ſwept by brokenneſs and emptineſs of Spirit, before the Lord will come to ſet up his abode in it. This was typified in the paſſage of the Children of Iſrael towards the promiſed Land; they muſt come into, and go through a vaſt and a roaring Wilderneſs, where they muſt be bruiſed with many preſſures, humbled under many overbearing difficulties, they were to meet withal before they could poſſeſs that good Land which abounded with all proſperity, flowed with Milk and Honey. The Truth of this Type, the Prophet *Hoſea* explains, and expreſſeth at large in the Lords dealing with his People in regard of their Spiritual Condition, *Hoſ.* 2. 14, 15. *I will lead her into the wilderneſs*, and break her heart with many bruiſing Miſeries, and *then I will ſpeak kindly to her heart, and will give her the Valley of Achor for*

for a door of hope; the ſtory you may recal out of *Joſ.* 7. 28. when *Achan* had offended in the execrable thing, and the hearts of the Iſraelites were diſcomfited and failed, like water ſpilt upon the ground, becauſe they had cauſed the Lord to depart away from them, the Text ſaies, they having found out the offender by lot, they ſtoned him, and they ſaid thou haſt troubled Iſrael, we will trouble thee, and they called it *the Valley of Achor*, and after that God ſupported their hearts with hope, and encouraged them with ſucceſs, both in prevailing over their Enemies, and in poſſeſſing the Land. So it ſhall be Spiritually, the Valley of Conſternation, perplexity of Spirit, and brokenneſs of heart, is the very gate and entrance of any ſound hope, and aſſured expectation of good. This I take to be the true meaning and intendment of the place, and part of the deſcription of a good Hearer, *Luke* 8. 15. *Who with an honeſt and good heart receives the Word, and keeps it*, by ſtrong hand, *and brings forth fruit with patience*; the fruit is Obedience, Patience is part of Sanctification, and the holy diſpoſition of heart, that muſt be in the heart, that brings and bears ſuch fruit, that which makes the heart good is Faith in Vocation, which enables the ſoul to lay hold upon Chriſt in the Word, and from him to receive that lively vertue of Patience, and readineſs to every holy word and work. And *an honeſt heart is a contrite and humble heart*, ſo rightly prepared that Faith is infuſed, and the ſoul thereby carried unto Chriſt, and quickened with patience to perſevere in good Duties. As we ſay of Grounds before we caſt in Seed; there is two things to be attended there, It muſt be a fit ground, and a fat ground; the ground is fit when the weeds and green ſword are plowed up, and the ſoyl there, and made mould: And this is done in Contrition and Humiliation; then it muſt be a fat ground, the ſoyl muſt have heart, we ſay the ground is plowed well, and lies well, but it's worn out, it's out of heart: Now Faith

fats

fats the ſoyl, furniſheth the ſoul with ability to faſten upon Chriſt, and ſo to receive the Seed of the Word, and the Graces of Sanctification, and thence it produceth good fruit in Obedience: Upon this condition Gods favor is promiſed, *Pſal.* 34.18. *The Lord is nigh to them that be of a contrite ſpirit, and ſaveth them that be of a broken heart.* Iſay 61. 3. *He gives the Garment of praiſe to thoſe that have had the ſpirit of heavineſs*; it will ſuit none, fit none, it's prepared for none but ſuch, it's their Livery only. Upon this condition it is obtained, *Mat.* 18. 3. *Unleſs ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye can in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* 2 Chron. 33. 12. It's ſaid of *Mannaſſeh, he humbled himſelf greatly*, and made ſupplication, and the Lord *was intreated of him*; ſuch perſons and ſervices are highly accepted, *Pſal.* 51. 17. *A broken and contrite heart O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe*, nay, he wil undoubtedly accept of it.

The Reaſons of the Point are taken, partly in regard of the heart, which without theſe will neither be fitted nor enabled to act upon God in Chriſt for any good; partly in regard of God, all his Ordinances and Diſpenſations will be unprofitable, and unable to do that good which he intends, and we need.

To the firſt in regard of our Hearts; thoſe Lets and impediments which put a kind of incapability, yea, and impoſſibility upon the ſoul, whereby the coming of Faith into the Heart, and ſo the entrance and reſidence of the Spirit are hindred, are by this diſpoſition wrought, and removed. Theſe Impediments are two: *Reaſ.* 1.

The firſt which ſtops the way and work of Faith is, a ſetled kind of contentedneſs in our corrupt condition, and the blind, yet bold and preſumptuous confidence that a natural man hath, and would maintain of his good condition. Each man ſits down willingly, well apaid with his own eſtate and portion, ſees no need of any change, and therefore not willing to hear of it. Each 1.

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man is ſo full of ſelf-love that he is loth to paſs a ſentence againſt his own ſoul, to become a judg and ſelf-condemner, and conſequently an executioner of all his hopes and comforts at once, and ſo put his happineſs and help out of his own hand. Beſides, we are Naturally afraid (out of the privy, yet direful guilt of our own Conſciences) to profeſs the wretchedneſs of our own miſerable and damnable Condition, as to put it upon a peremptory concluſion, and that beyond queſtion, I am undone, I am a damned man, in the Gall of bitterneſs, in the bonds of iniquity, leſt they ſhould ſtir ſuch horrors, which they are neither able to quiet, nor yet able to bear. And therefore out of the preſumption of their own hearts, they would eaſily perſwade and delude themſelves, they have no cauſe to alter their condition, and therfore they ſhould not endeavor it. Hence the carnal heart is ſaid to bear up himſelf againſt all the aſſaults of the Word, *Deut.* 29. 19. *When all the Curſes of the Law were denounced* with never ſo much evidence, yet the preſumptuous ſinner *bleſſeth himſelf*, promiſeth all good to himſelf, and ſecretly feeds himſelf with vain hopes that he ſhal attain it, therfore he wil not ſtir to ſeek for a better eſtate, nor yet receive it if offered, *Job*, 22. 17. *They ſay unto the Almighty, depart from us, we deſire not the knowledg of his waies*: do Miniſters preſs them, do others perſwade them to a more ſerious and narrow ſearch, to get more grounded aſſurance of their eſtate in Grace, they profeſs they bid them to their loſs, they think they need not be better, nor do they deſire to be other. It is impoſſible upon theſe terms that ever the ſoul ſhould be carried by Faith unto God.

For to be contented and quieted with our condition, as that which beſt pleaſeth, and yet to ſeek out for another, are things contradictory. And yet this Faith doth, For he that is in Chriſt, is a new Creature, behold all things are become new, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. he muſt have new comforts,

comforts, new desires, new hopes, therfore the heart must be broken to pieces under the weight of the evil of sin, and the Curses due to the old condition, before this wil part; for that the word here used with great elegancy and pregnancy implies, viz. by an oppressing weight to be pashed to pouder and dust. So the Psalmist useth it, *Psal.* 90. 3. Thou turnest man to pouder, to the dust of death: when a mans composition is dissolved, and the body returned again into its first principle; so the word here by way of resemblance, implies that the soul should find his corruption his greatest oppression, so that the composition betwixt sin and his soul should be dissolved and taken down, and the nature of man return to his first principles, and primitive disposition that he sees an absolute necessity to change, and then he will seek and be willing to receive a change: *The whol need no Physitian*, and therefore will not seek; *but the sick* that need, will be content to receive; The issue is, If the soul be contented with its sinful condition, and would not have a change, then it cannot be under the power of Faith, or receive that which will bring a change; but before the soul be broken under the pressure of sin, it would not have a change, therefore so long it cannot be under the power of Faith.

Be it granted that the soul finds sin as a plague, and therefore would be preserved from the evil of it: the second impediment which wholly keeps out Faith is this, When the sinner expects supply and succor from its own sufficiency, either outward excellencies, abilities of Nature, or common Graces or the beauty of some performances which issue from any of these: For this is Natural to all men ever since Innocency, That since the staff was put into his own hand, and then needed not, nay should not deny their own strength, therefore to this day this practice of old *Adam* remains still in all his posterity, they will scramble for their own Comforts, and try the utmost of their own strength, to help themselves 2.

rather than be beholding to another to help them: Hence in caſes of Conſcience and trouble, men are ſo ready to reſolve, ſo apt and free to promiſe and profeſs amendment, what they will do, and others ſhall ſee it as well as they reſolve it, and ſo alas it comes to nothing in concluſion, either they fall back unto their baſe courſes, when horror and fear is over, or elſe waſting away into a wearish formality, and ſo periſh in their Hypocriſie. This is an apparent bar to faith, which is the going out of the ſoul to fetch all life and power from another. Now wholly to be in our ſelves, and to ſtay upon our own ability, and yet to go out of himſelf to Chriſt and receive all from his ſufficiency, are things which cannot ſtand together, *I came not to call the righteous*, Mat. 9. 13. *While they ſought to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs*, they did not ſubmit to the Righteouſneſs of God.

Hence therefore the ſecond work of Humiliation is required, whereby God plucks away all his props, and emptieth him wholly of what he hath or ſeemeth to have. For pride (unto which Humiliation is oppoſite) is but the rankneſs of praiſe, and praiſe is a fruit of a cauſe by counſel, that hath power to do or not to do this or that, as he ſees fit: Humiliation is the utter nothingneſs of the ſoul, that we have no power, it's not in our choyce to diſpoſe of our ſelves, nor yet to diſpoſe of that which another gives, nor yet ſafe to repine at his diſpoſe: In a word, as in a Scion before it be ingrafted into another ſtock, it muſt be cut off from the old, and pared, and then implanted. In Contrition we are cut off; in Humiliation pared, and ſo fit to be implanted into Chriſt by Faith.

Reaſ. 2. In regard of God, without this diſpoſition his Word will not, nay cannot take any place in us, or prevail with us for our good: Counſels, and Commands, and Comforts, or whatever Diſpenſations, they fal as water upon a Rock, when adminiſtred to a hard heart, they enter not, prevail

prevail not, profit not at all. As Christ told the Jews, John, 8.37. *My Word takes no place in you,* and *Zach.* 7. 11, 12. *They hardened their hearts as an Adamant, &c.*

A word of terror to dash the hopes, and sink the hearts of all haughty and hard hearted sinners, God owns not such, will never vouchsafe his gracious presence with them, or his Blessing upon them for good; be where they will, dwell where they will, the Lord is not with them, nor will dwel in them, by his comforting, quickening, saving presence: Hear and fear then all you stout-hearted, stubborn, and rebellious Creatures, whose consciences can evidence that the day is yet to dawn, the hour yet to come, that ever you found your sins a pressure to you, they have been your past-time and delight in which you have pleased your selves, so far from being troubled for your evils that it is your only trouble you may not commit them with content, and without controul, you are troubled with Admonitions, and Counsels, and Commands, and Threatnings that cross you in your sins. You were never broken-hearted here for your abominations, know assuredly that you wil burn for them one day; your proud hearts were never abased, and laid in the dust, the Lord will ruinate both you and them. Never expect a good look from God, set your heart at rest for that, you may draw the Eyes of others after you, make many of your deluded followers and Favorites to look upon you, but the Lord will not come neer, nor once cast a loving look towards you, Psal. 138. 6. *Though the Lord be high, he hath respect to the lowly, but he knows the proud afar off.* Nay, the great God of Heav n and Earth is up in Arms against thee, he is upon the March to work thy destruction, James, 4. 6. *The Lord resists the proud, but he gives Grace to the humble*; all Grace is in his gift, and he doles it only to the bruised and abated; but there is no thought nor expectation that thou shalt receive any

Use, 1.

Grace, nay, that Grace that thy rebellious and proud heart hath oppoſed and reſiſted, will work thy own ruine. Thou art the mark of Gods direful indignation and vengeance, he plants all his Forces againſt thee; If all the Wiſdom in Heaven can contrive thy confuſion, all the Power in Heaven work it, all the Juſtice there determine it, it ſhall be done. God is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, he ſaveth ſuch as be of a broken ſpirit, *Pſal.* 34. 18. true, and mark it, *Of ſuch*, but ſuch thou art not, ſuch thou derideſt, ſcorneſt, whoſe hearts fail them under the weight of their abominations, thou lookeſt at them as mopiſh, ſilly, deſpicable men, well, ſuch you ſhall ſee ſaved for ever, when ſuch untamed, preſumptuous, proud wretches as thou art ſhall be turned into Hell.

Obj. But we do ſee our ſins, and have had many girds and galls of Conſcience for them.

Anſ. True, It may be there hath been ſome blows upon thine heart, Conſcience it hath ſmitten thee, the hammer of the Word, it hath laid ſome ſtroaks, but it hath not broken thy heart to this day; and that is thus diſcerned (to go no further now than the very expreſſion of the Text.)

If thy ſoul be beaten to pouder with this oppreſſion of thy diſtempers (for ſo this brokenneſs of heart was opened before) then as it is with the hardeſt flints, when they are broken to duſt, they are eaſily yielding, and give way to take the impreſſion of the hand, or whatever is laid upon them: The ſtone which out of its hardneſs before, oppoſed and ſtarted aſide from the ſtrongeſt ſtroak that was laid, now its turned into duſt the leaſt and eaſieſt touch leaves a print and impreſſion upon it; ſo it is expounded, as appears in this oppoſition, 2 *Chron.* 30. 8. *Be not ſtiff-necked, but yield your ſelves.* Obſerve then, is it ſo? when the power of the Word comes, the Scriptures are pregnant, Arguments undeniable, Counſels ſweet, Reproofs ſharp and ſeaſonable, yet thy Heart

heart ſhifts and ſtarts aſide, and hits back the Authority of the truth, which thou canſt not gain-ſay. The heart may be battered, but it was never broken, it may be overpowred and awed, but it was never humbled to this day. Its that of *Prov.* 3. 32. The froward in heart is an abomination to the Lord, but the upright, he that lies level, and bows to the Truth, are his delight. A froward man, that is, he that turns off from the Authority of the Truth: Is this thy temper? thy heart was never broken to duſt to this day, but frampful and froward, know thou art an abomination to the Lord. If thou ſhouldſt go to Heaven to dwel there, truly God would go out of Heaven, he would not dwell with thee. Quere

Pharaoh is the pattern of all proud Hearts, he hardened himſelf in his wickedneſs againſt the Word of the Lord. But a broken and humble heart, either lies right, or will come right, it will come to that bent of the Rule that is revealed: Hard things makes that which is moſt ſoft to aſſimilate to them; eaſie and yielding things aſſimilate to whatever they cloſe: ſo Water in a round Veſſel takes that form, in a three ſquare Veſſel, takes that. So here.

Inſtruction, To teach us to delight in ſuch, to deſire the Society of ſuch as are contrite and humble men, to dwel there where God dwels; ſeem their perſons never ſo mean, their conditions never ſo baſe, their eſtates never ſo low, themſelves never ſo deſpicable, yet if they be men of broken Spirits, God is with them. Go into their Societies as men that reſolve to go to the Court; for where the King is, the Court is; and where God is, Heaven is: the Lord hath two Thrones; the one of Glory in Heaven, where he is all in all to his; another here on Earth, an humble heart, where he doth all only of himſelf, and for himſelf. Therefore as they in *Zachary*, 8. laſt, *Ten men ſhall lay hold on the skirt of a Jew, and they ſhall ſay, we will go with you, for we have heard God is with you.* Much more here, for the Lord Uſe, 2.

Lord is not only with humble hearts, but he dwels in them; we ſhould therfore entertain ſuch Servants into our Families, ſuch Inhabitants into Plantations, and ſuch Members into Congregations, for ſo you entertain God himſelf; Reſolve as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Entreat me not to forſake thee, for where thou liveſt, I will live, thy people ſhall be my people, thy God my God, where thou dieſt I will die, and there will I be buried, and nothing but death ſhall part thee and me.* Nay, go further, ye bleſſed Spirits (ſay) death ſhall not part us, I will be broken-hearted with you, and humble with you, and God ſhall dwel in us, and we ſhal dwel with him in Heaven for ever. Oh now ye are right, keep here, and be happy here for ever.

Uſe, 3. Exhortation, To perſwade us all, and to prevail with us to take the right way to enjoy Gods preſence, not only to ſeek for mercy, but ſeek it in Gods Order, not only to covet Gods preſence, but in Gods manner; labor to be humble and broken-hearted Chriſtians: then expect we may that the Lord will manifeſt the preſence of his Grace and Spirit with us, and in us, but not elſe: Every man catcheth at Chriſt, and Mercy, and Comfort, but not in a right Method, and therefore they loſe him, and their labor alſo. This is Gods order. Firſt be humble and broken, and then he will revive your Spirits with his preſence, 2. *Cor.* 6. 19. *Come out from among them, and touch no unclean thing; then I will receive you, and be a Father to you.* In a word, ſtrive to enter in at the ſtraight Gate of Contrition and Humiliation, and then you will hit the right way to Chriſt and eternal Life.

The

The Tenth Book.

ACTS, 2. 37.

And when they heard this, they were pricked in their Hearts, and ſaid unto them, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?

THere be two Things eſpecially obſervable in that diſpoſition of Heart, which the Lord requires and works in thoſe he will draw to Chriſt, *Contrition*, and *Humiliation*. The neceſſity of both theſe, we declared the laſt day, as that they were not only to be looked at for complement and conveniency, but ſuch as are of neceſſity required, that the heart may be fitted for the impreſſion of Faith, and by it for the entertainment of the Lord Chriſt; for if the ſinner be ſo ſettled in ſecure Contentment of his own condition as that he thinks he need not change; or if he muſt, he is ſo confident of his own ability, that he can change himſelf, and out of himſelf, and out of his own ſtrength relieve himſelf, he wil never go out to another for ſuccor and ſupply. Contrition looſens a man from his ſin, makes him ſee an abſolute neceſſity to be another man, or elſe he is a damned man. Humiliation looſens a man from himſelf, makes him ſee an utter inſufficiency in what he hath or doth, for to procure the leaſt ſpiritual relief unto his ſoul; now the Coaſt is cleer, that Faith may come to us, and we by that be enabled to come to Chriſt.

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We are now to purſue theſe two according to the order propounded. And firſt of the former, the Sum of which Work may thus be deſcribed:

Contrition is that Preparative Diſpoſition of Heart, when by the ſight of ſin, and the puniſhment due to the ſame, the ſoul is brought to ſound ſorrow for it, and ſo brought to deteſt it, and to ſequeſter it ſelf from it.

The Deſcription ſtands upon two Paſſages mainly.

I. The Cauſes which bring in this Contrition.
   1. Sight of Sin.
   2. Sorrow for Sin.

II. The Effects which nextly diſcover this, and whereby it comes to be known.
   1. Deteſtation of Sin.
   2. Sequeſtration from ſin.

And here I deſire that ſtill may be remembred which I mentioned and diſcovered before, That all theſe are things rather wrought upon us by the impreſſion and motion of the Spirit, than performed by any inward principle, and habitual power of Grace received, and this the manner of the expreſſions in the words of the deſcription plainly intimates; *the ſoul brought* to ſee his ſins, *brought* to ſorrow for them, *brought* to deteſt them, and ſequeſter it ſelf from them: For the ſinner would not look upon the loathſomneſs of his ſoul, and the filth of his ſinful diſtempers, but the Lord laies it before him, and holds his apprehenſion to it, follows him with the remembrance of it, and forceth his thoughts to give attendance thereunto. *Pſal.* 51. 3. *My ſin is ever before me*; which way ſoever he turns his thoughts, his ſins ſtared him in the face, and were full in his view; they dwelt with him, and were dayly in his preſence, that where ever he was, they were, he could not look off from them, look which way he would.

2. The

2. The ſinner would ſhake off the ſorrow that now ſeizeth upon him, and ſeems to overbear him like a mighty ſtream, he labors to beat back the blow, and to make an eſcape from under the ſtroke of the Truth that ſtabs and wounds his heart, with the direful expreſſion of Gods diſpleaſure, and dreadfulneſs of the evil that doth attend him; but he can neither avoid it, nor remove it, neither keep himſelf from the wound, nor cure it, *Pſal.* 40. *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, that I cannot look up*: a ſimilitude taken from the Prey that flies from the Purſuer, though he would have fled from the terrors of the Almighty, wreſted and reſcued himſelf from under the attachment, yet they overtake him, and take ſuch hold of him that he cannot eſcape: *Pſal.* 38. 2. Thine Arrows ſtick faſt in me, and thine hand preſſeth me ſore; he would have plucked out the Arrows of Gods indignation, but his skil and ſtrength failed him, he could not be eaſed, they could not be removed from him: until at length, the ſoul feeling the wrath of the Almighty, and ſeeing no way to avoid an everlaſting ſeparation from the Lord, if yet his ſins be entertained by him, being thus preſſed by the power of that undeniable Truth, which laies open the loathſomneſs of his ſin, and makes him feel the bitterneſs thereof, he is carried with deteſtation againſt it, and driven to make a ſequeſtration from it. Of the fuller meaning of both theſe, when we ſhal come to the particular ſcanning of them, in their proper place.

For the ground of my following diſcourſe I have taken the words of the Text, in which you have the grounds and hints of all the former Truths, not implyed only by way of collection, but expreſly ſet down, and profeſſedly aimed at as evidently diſcovering the manner of Gods dealing herein.

The knowledg of their ſins ſet down with the Cauſes thereof, *when they heard theſe things.* *Hearing*] not that every hearing, or bare hearing would ſerve the turn, 1.

for it's beyond queſtion, that thouſands do, and many there did hear thoſe ſavory Truths ſeaſonably diſpenſed by *Peter*, which were never either throughly convinced, nor had their hearts in any manner affected therewith; the meaning therefore muſt needs be this, When by their hearing they rightly diſcerned, and cleerly conceived thoſe things, *i. e.* the nature of thoſe ſins, which *Peter* had diſcovered and charged ſo punctually upon them; *Let all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly that God hath made that Jeſus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Chriſt.* When they ſo heard that they yielded and aſſented fully to that which was ſo peremptorily profeſſed by the Apoſtle, then they were pricked to the heart.

We have then here the ſight and knowledg of their ſin, together with the Cauſes by which they came to attain it, and thoſe were here intimated in the words.

1. Their Conviction, in that they ſtood here indited and accuſed by *Peter*, and condemned in their own Conſciences that they were the guilty perſons, guilty of no leſs than the blood of the Lord Jeſus the Son of God, and Savior of the World, who is now advanced at Gods right hand as Lord and King, and ſhall come in flaming fire as a Judg to condemn them for their bloody ſins; who came in the fleſh as a Redeemer to ſave them from their ſins: But they rejected him and their own mercy and ſafety; and this ſaies the Apoſtle admits no oppoſition, no diſputation at all; *Let the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly*, ασφαλως, It's a Truth that ſtands as Mount Zion, that cannot be ſtirred: it is beyond all cavelling, queſtioning, doubting, beyond all probability or poſſibility to be other, a Truth not ſubject to any ſlipping or uncertainty; ſo the word ſignifies.

2. The particular application that the Apoſtle here uſeth of their ſpecial ſins, he doth not hover in generals, ſhoot at rovers, but lets fly point blank in the faces of them; *This Jeſus whom ye have crucified.* He names not

not any other, blames not any other now, ſaies not *Judas* was a wretch that betraied Chriſt, the Soldiers cruel and injurious that took him and bound him; *Pilate* baſely fearful and unjuſt that condemned him, he will not now ſpeak to men abſent; but *you are they that crucified him*, you that *cried, let his blood be upon us*, you ſhall have blood enough, plagues enough: this particular application ſets hard, ſinks deep, they heard theſe their ſins thus ripped up, and themſelves arreſted for them.

There is a ſerious Meditation and attention here alſo implyed. The word is in the Participle *Hearing*, noting a continued act; *Hearing, hearing* theſe ſadly attending and pondering of them in their thoughts, they came then to be pierced. Thus we have the ſight of their ſins here laid open to us, together with the Cauſes thereof. 1.

The ſecond thing in this contrition, is ſound and through ſorrow, and that is expreſſed in the next Phraſe, they were pierced not in their eyes only, which made them weep, but in their hearts, which made them bleed inwardly with Godly ſorrow. 2.

Their deteſtation and ſequeſtration appears in the laſt words, *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* we will do any thing, ſuffer any thing, command what you wil, enjoyn what you pleaſe, be it never ſo hard, we will endeavor it; never ſo croſs to our hearts or comforts, we will bear it; better be any thing than be thus vile, let's be in any condition, that once we might be freed from this ſinful and accurſed condition, in which we be. 3.

We have taken liberty to lay out our Work with as much plainneſs and openneſs of order as we may; becauſe we ſhall have occaſion to mind you of the particulars in our future proceeding, and how the ſeveral truths ſerve each others turn, in their place and order.

Before we come to the Particulars, one Point lies in the very entrance, which will be very ſerviceable to

make way for all the Truths following, and therefore we ſhall take in that at this time, that it may be as an Harbenger to make room for all the reſt. And it ariſeth from a right conſideration of the parties to whom *Peter* here ſpeaks, and with whom his word ſo prevailed, and took place. In the 36. verſe he tels them, that ſame Jeſus whom *ye have crucified.* They were therefore ſuch as had rejected, blaſphemed, crucified the Lord of Glory; thoſe who in a bloody manner took away the life of Chriſt, who came to take away their ſins. Is it poſſible, is it credible, that ever mercy ſhould be extended unto ſuch? that ever good ſhould be wrought in ſuch? Yes, Lo here, *When they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts.* They whoſe hands were imbrewed in the blood of Jeſus, their hearts are now wounded with Godly ſorrow, and ſo made fit to receive Grace and Mercy.

Hence the Doctrine is,

Doct. *Stubborn and bloody ſinners, may be made broken-hearted ſinners*: Bloody, helliſh, abominable ſinners may yet obtain broken hearts; worſe than theſe could hardly be conceived or imagined, and yet God makes work of theſe knotty wayward Spirits; It was ſaid of him that betrayed Chriſt, *it had been good for him that he had never been born.* What ſhall we ſay of them that murdered our Savior? they are in the higheſt rank of the moſt wicked men that ever were born, yet even ſuch as theſe, who alſo oppoſed the Word and Goſpel of Grace, the Diſciples and Apoſtles, the Preachers and Publiſhers of Grace, the Author and God of Grace; yet ſuch as theſe have now their hearts broken, and in ſome meaſure prepared to be partakers thereof.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1. 29. That they were *full of all unrighteouſneſs*; there can hardly be added any thing to the largeneſs of the expreſſion: No ſin worſe for the kind, more for the number, greater for the meaſure, for they had *all unrighteouſneſs*, all the

the kinds of evil, and all degrees in the largeſt extent they were full, and yet of ſuch the Apoſtle profeſſeth 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. when he had mentioned a heap of moſt loathſom and hideous abominations; *Know ye not that no unrighteous perſon ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, ſelf-Polluters, Extortioners, Covetous perſons, ſhall ever enter into the Kingdom of God*: then verſe 11. *And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Some ſuch as theſe were ſavingly brought home to God. Yea, when corruption becomes like an old cankered ſore of long continuance, and the ſinner incorrigible under all the choyceſt means that have been uſed, yet then the Lord works the Cure, *Iſay*, 57. 18. *I was angry with him for his evil luſtings, and he went on in the frowardneſs of his own heart*, ther is no help if the Diſeaſe grow worſe for the dreſſing, the Prophet adds, *I have ſeen his waies, I will heal him, and lead him, and reſtore comforts to him, and to thoſe that mourn with him*; as if he ſhould ſay, Ah poor Creature, he cannot ſee himſelf nor me, yet I ſee him, and his way, he wounds himſelf, but I will heal him; he deludes himſelf, but I wil lead him; ſink he muſt in his own ſorrow, but I will ſuccor him, and ſupply to him, *Iſay*, 48. 4. *I know thou art obſtinate, and thy neck is an Iron ſinew, and thy brow is Braſs*; and yet verſe 17. *I am the Lord thy Redeemer that teach thee to profit, and leadeſt thee by the way thou ſhouldeſt go.* The Lord bows an Iron ſinew, and makes it bendable unto his will: The Lord makes ſnowy Saints of ſcarlet ſinners; Scarlet we know is twice dyed in the Wool, and in the Web and Cloth, and therefore it is beyond all the skil and art of man to alter it. Yet though our ſins be ſuch, bred in our Natures, committed in our Lives, and therefore beyond our reach and skil, and the power of all

all means and performances we can take up to remove them, yet the Lord hath undertaken it, and he will do it. *Isa.* 1. 18.

There is a Threefold Argument to settle this Truth.

Reas. 1. Taken from the largeness of his Mercy, which is as himself, Infinite; and therefore infinitely exceeds all our wants, and can supply them, all our weaknesses and infirmities, and therefore can forgive them, and remove them as he will, as though they had never been. *Isa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and return unto the Lord, for he will abundantly pardon, and to our God, for he will have mercy.* But the discouraged sinner might happily reply, It is Mercy that I have abused, and his pardons he hath tendered, yet I in the time of my folly have trampled under my feet, and therefore with what face could I beg mercy, or upon what ground could I think ever to receive it? He answers, *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your waies my waies; for as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my thoughts than your thoughts*: there is no proportion, no comparison, the Earth is not of a valuable consideration to the Heavens, but like a Centre in the Circumference, it is as though it was not. So here, the thoughts of Gods Mercy to pardon thee, is so far beyond the evil of thy waies, and thoughts to condemn, that they are as though they were not: nay, though thou couldest not beleeve it, or think it, yet the Lord could and would do it. This is one of his names, *He keeps mercy for thousands*, Exod. 34. 7. he hath it in store for thousands, *and* FORGIVES *Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin*, that is, all kinds and degrees of sin; and he must be thus, or else he were not God: For did our sins exceed his mercies, our weakness his strength; were Satan more malicious to tempt us, and powerful to overcome us, than he was gracious to defend, and Almighty to

to deliver, then were he not God if any thing were impossible to him, or had power above him; And hence the Lord delights to set forth the praise of his Mercy, and therefore when sin is most vile, and hainous, and hellish, then doth he express his compassion in a most glorious manner; it's the glory of the Physitian when the Disease is most deadly, then to do the Cure, *Isa.* 43. 24,25. *You have wearied me with your iniquities, and made me to serve with your sins, behold I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my name sake*; q. d. None but a God of endless Mercy could do it, therefore behold it, acknowledg it, *I will blot out your iniquities, and remember your sins no more.* This is the dispute of the Apostle, *Rom.* 5. last, having said that our Justification, Reconciliation, and Life comes by Grace, he ads, why then serves the Law? he answers, That sin might abound, that sin might be encreased, and become more and more hainous, because against an express Law, but *where sin abounded, grace abounded much more*; the Lord gave (as it were) sin all advantages to do its utmost, and yet then Grace would abound so much the more in conquering and raigning over sin: And therefore it's certain, if all sins in the world (that against the Holy Ghost excepted) should meet in one Soul as Waters in the Sea, the Mercy of the Lord would abound much more, because those sins did abound.

Reas. 2. The Merits of our Savior Christ are of an infinite satisfying vertue, and exceed the venom of the guilt of all sins, *Rom*, 5. 18. So *Paul* constantly disputes, *If by the offence of one sin entred unto condemnation, much more by the death and obedience of our Savior Righteousness entred unto eternal Life.* And therefore it was that our Savior was pleased to receive our Nature even from the vilest of sinners, that he might shew himself a Savior from all sins, *Matth.* 1. Hence also his blood is called *a fountain set open for* Judah *and* Israel, *to wash in, for sin, and for uncleanness*, Zach 13. 1. *i.e.* For all

sinners but to destroy their sins first; I never found the one, I must not expect the other, nor you neither. This is *to captivate the thoughts*, to bring them under the spear, under the Authority of the Truth that they may not once hush or stir, 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. And this is *that spirit of Bondage* the Apostle speaks of, *Rom.* 8. 15. It makes us sensible of our slavery, and binds a man hand and foot as it were, fenceth his way with fears, besets his passage on every side with expectation of evil, which he cannot tell how to bear, or how to avoid; he sees he can procure no relief nor succor to himself, and fears he shall never obtain none from the Lord, dares not commit sin as formerly, yet cannot tell how to be freed from it. So that as *Reuben* sometimes in another case, so the sinner in this, *and I, whither shall I go?* Gen. 37. 30. evils appear from every quarter which way soever he looks; if to Heaven, there is Justice to punish; if to Hell, there are Devils to torment; into himself, there is Conscience to accuse; on Earth in his dayly course, there is nothing but his dayly rebellions, and his confusion dayly before his face, and the truth is the more terrible because he hath withstood it so long: That as it fares with the prisoner that had the freedom of the prison while he carried himself fairly, but because he hath been taken in some false pranks, and plotting an escape, he is now laid in the Dungeon and laded with Irons, now never like to see good day, or look for any breathing. So here, my estate is more miserable because I have opposed the means that might have procured my help, the checks of Conscience I have smothered or slighted; many warnings I have had, but willingly forgot them; many sad reproofs that laid hold on me, but I studied how to wrest away my thoughts; it's just with God to load me with Curses, which would never look for comfort from God in a right way. If ever there was a Rebel, I am he; if ever God condemned a Rebel, he wil condemn me.

Lastly,

Laſtly, This Conviction is victorious and invincible, It doth not only ſtop the mouth of carnal Reaſon, and the cavils thereof, but alſo diſplaceth it. It not only ſtills the ſhifts and pretences of the ſinner, but makes the mind and heart give attendance to the Truth, to be ſubject thereunto, and to take the impreſſion thereof. For otherwiſe the ſinner thus tyred and dauled by the dayly laying at of the Truth, may either happily lie ſtill, though not cavil with it, yet not give attendance to it. But in a ſtupid kind of ſottiſh ſenceleſneſs, wear out the blow, and ſo waſt away to nothing, as many out of ſorrow have become like ſenceleſs blocks. Though their practice hath not been evil, yet they have had no heart to good; or elſe they fall to deſperate prophaneneſs or profeſſed oppoſition; when they cannot eſcape the priſon, they'l break the priſon, and lay violent hands upon the Keeper, *Rom.* 1. 18. *They hold down the Truth in unrighteouſneſs*, they impriſon the Truth while the Truth ſhould impriſon them, therefore when the Lord will ſettle an over-powring Conviction, he makes it victorious: Therefore he is ſaid, *Job*, 36. 9, 10. *When he ſhews them their tranſgreſſions, he commands that they return from iniquity.* Truth wil break out, and over-bear and force the mind and heart to give attendance and take the impreſſion of it, as when the Conquerer and he that hath got the Victory, comes in place, all give attendance unto his command. The want of the maintaining this conquering power of a Conviction, I take to be the cauſe why many even of Gods own are ſo marveloufly taken aſide after al the helps they do enjoy, and the reſolutions they take up. I have often wondred when a man hath bewailed with much bitterneſs in daies of humiliation ſuch and ſuch evils, begged for grace and help, and reſolved againſt them; they know and confeſs it's in vain to cavil, or think to make an eſcape, nay they reject ſuch a purpoſe, and yet they are taken aſide, and that ſtrangely and ordinarily they fall again to tam-

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per with their old corruptions. They do not put this Conviction into commission, they do not make it victorious, or maintain it so, or the Authority thereof, so as to force attendance. When the Dam is good, and the Mill tight, why goes it not? There is not so much Water kept as to drive it, because they have let out the stream and strength another way; therefore there is not so much power in a conviction as to force attendance, and to drive the heart to obedience. Therefore as *Paul* said to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 15, 16. *Meditate upon these things, and continue in them, or be in these things.* So you must be in a Conviction, and continue under it if you would find it victorious, and then it wil be so first or last, and wil eat out al opposition, though with much ado. As it is with *Aqua fortis* if laid upon Iron, though it do not at once, and suddenly, yet secretly and insensibly it wil eat the Iron in pieces. So it is with a Truth which God wil make victorious, it will lie upon the Spirit of a man, and eat there, and work there, and break out effectually, it may be many yeers after, *Job*, 33. 16. this is called *the sealing of an Instruction*; which is to add Authority and Soveraignty to it, as when the Edict was sealed by the intreaty of *Haman*, there was no opposing, no gainsaying of it.

The Reasons of the Point (which was the fourth Particular attended in the Explication) come now to be considered: And these are two:

Reas. 1. The first is taken from the order which the Lord in the way of his providence and work of nature hath placed betwixt the mind and the heart, the understanding and wil of man. these two faculties have a near kind of correspondencie, the one to help forward the work of the other. Knowledg and understanding is the inlet into the soul nothing comes to the heart nor can work upon it but so far as knowledg makes way, & ushers it in

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(as it were) into the presence of the wil and leaves an impression thereof upon it. We use to say that which the eye sees not the heart rues not; that which the understanding conceives not, the wil is not, nay cannot be affected with, if Good to embrace it, if evil to be burdened and troubled therewith. Its the method *David* observed in Gods dispensation towards him, when his heart was brought to a hatred against the evil of his waies, *Psal.* 119. 107. *By thy Commandements have I got understanding therefore I hate every false way.* Unless a right understanding go before, a through hatred wil not follow after. As it is in the body unless the stomach receive and hold and convey also the purgation either to the spleen or lower parts of the body be the receit never so strong, yet wil it never stir the humor, or trouble nature though the distemper were abundant & dangerous. Because in an ordinary course of providence, there is no way to come to the humor but by this means. Its so in the soul, be the truths delivered attended with never so much terror and power, able to sink the heart of a sinful Creature as not able to endure the dread of it, if yet the understanding conceives not the nature of such truths, nor convey and settle them sadly and Convictingly upon the heart, its not at all stirred in the least measure therewith much less troubled with the danger discovered therein, because they cannot reach the heart, therefore can never work upon it. As through ignorance we commit sin because we see not the evil in it, so after commission we sorrow not because we apprehend not the vileness and danger *Acts.* 3. 17. *I know that through ignorance you did it, as did also your Fathers,* 1. Cor. 2. 8. *For had they known it they would never have crucified the Lord of life,* It fares with a fals-hatred sinner as it did with the wife of *Jeroboam,* when she came to enquire of her sick Child, all the while she had received no certain evidence, whether it would dy or live her heart was quieted and comforted

forted in her preſent hopes. But when *Abijah* the Prophet related the meſſage of the Lord, *Come in thou wife of Jeroboam why faineſt thou thy ſelf to be another? behold I am ſent to thee with heavy tidings. the Lord wil bring evil upon the houſe of* Jeroboam *and wil cut off him that is left, get thee home to thy houſe, and aſſoon as thy feet enter into thy houſe the Child ſhal dy,* this ſunk her hopes, ſo fares it with a faſt-harted ignorant ſinner he may be quieted with the perſent appreſion, of his good condition when he hath no evidence to the contrary. But when the Lord ſets up an overpouring conviction in the mind wch may give in certain and infallible witneſs of its woful and wretched eſtate Hear thou faſt-hearted hypocrite why faineſt thou thy ſelf to be another? and befooleſt thy ſelf with vayn hopes behold here is heavy tidings ſent unto thee from the Lord of hoſts. thou art yet *in the gal of bitterneſs in the bond of iniquity* and if thou dieſt ſo, thou wilt certainly periſh from the preſence of the Lord for ever. This faſtening the truth upon the conſcience comes home and forceth the heart to feel and to be affected therewith.

Reaſ. 2. *Ignorance fruſtrates wholly the end of all the means we uſe, and the endeavours we take up for reformation of the evills of our hearts and lives.* For.

1. Firſt it miſleads all our endeavors that they ſucceed not; it miſleads our whol courſe and our proceedings againſt our ſins, and out of miſtakes preſents our corruption as appearing ſweet through our miſguided apprehenſion, and cauſes us to oppoſe our Saviour Chriſt and his truth that would ſubdue them. This *Paul* profeſſed to be the ground of his miſguided carriage, when he ſhould have perſecuted the enemies of the Church he purſues the Church and that out of zeal, *Phil.* 3. 6. *concerning zeal I perſecuted the Church,* ſo far from finding his ſin bitter to him or having his heart broken from it, as that he purſues the practiſe

practice of it with the greateſt expreſſion of zeal, as that which deſerved the beſt of his endeavour and wherein he might ſpend the beſt of his pains and that you may ſee how ready we are in the dark to put up Snakes in our boſoms inſtead of ſweet flowers. He nakedly and ingeniouſly confeſſed whither his ignorance led. *I did verily think in my ſelf I ſhould do many things againſt the Name of Jeſus.* *Acts.* 26. He that conceived it as a matter of duty to do ſuch things, his heart upon ſuch grounds under ſuch deluſions would never be carryed againſt theſe, Ignorance wil make a man ſwallow the worſt without any change, 1 *John* 16. 2. *the time will come that they who ſhall kill you, will think they do God good ſervice,* that which keeps the ſoul inſenſible of the bitterneſs of ſin, and from feeling of the weight of ſin, that will alſo keep it from being weary of it, and willing to part with it It's a popiſh practice and a principle of the power of darkneſs. Ignorance is the Mother of devotion; when men cannot tell how to lead themſelves or ſee their own way you may lead them which way you wil, and if once Satan can keep a man from the ſight of his ſin he wil keep him ſure under the command of ſin, and drive him to do his drudgery and that with delight and reſolution, when the Phyliſtians had put out *Sampſons* eyes, they led him whither they would and made him do what they would. *Paul* in his ignorance ſtrikes a Friend inſtead of an Enemy, and ſtrikes he neither knowes nor cares who. *Acts.* 9. *who art thou Lrod?*

2 As thus ignorance miſleads a mans whol courſe that it ſucceds not, ſo it perverts the power of all means that they profit not, miſapplies al the means he hath, and ſo ſpoyles them and his own peace and comfort alſo inſomuch that his corruptions grow more ſtrong and incorporated into him and he more unwilling to part with them, and thats the fruit of ignorance; the promiſes and comforts of the Goſpel which do not apper-

tain to him, he catcheth greedily at them, as a portion provided for himſelf, and goes away with that dream, and ſwels unmeaſurably with preſumption and ſelf-confidence; *Are not al the Congregation holy* ? what needs this ſevering and differencing of men? what are theſe who would be the only Saints? are not we al ſinners, and Chriſt dyed for ſuch and for us as wel as for them? the threatnings and curſes which the Lord denounceth againſt the ungodly they caſt them away with a fearleſs contempt, as ſuch as do in no wiſe touch them or concern their particulars, and therefore ſhould not trouble them; *tuſh ſay they we have made a league with death and a covenant with Hell, and when the deſtroying ſcourge paſſeth over, it ſhal not come near to them*, Iſay. 28. 15. *yea they do commit evil, and yet ſay they are delivered by the Lord*, *Jer.* 7. Thus they grow ſecure and hard hearted, the wholſom counſels and directions of the word, which ſhould be light unto their feet, and a diſcovery of al their failings, they ſlight the exact attendance thereunto as that which God wil not exact at their hands, becauſe *in many things we ſin al*, and ſo become careleſs or negligent as though they ſhould not anſwer, and the Lord would not exact what they cannot do. Its with an ignorant ſinner in the midſt of all means as with a ſick man remaining in an Apothecaries ſhop, ful of choyceſt Medicines in the darkeſt night: though there be the choyceſt af all receipts at hand, and he may take what he needs, yet becauſe he cannot ſee what he takes, and how to uſe them, he may kill himſelf or encreaſe his diſtempers, but never cure any diſeaſe: ſo here with an ignorant perſon, he enjoyes al means, and yet abuſes them, he may encreaſe his corruptions, but not reform them, his heart grows more hard, and his corruptions more ſtrong, but he cannot in reaſon expect any help.

Uſe. 1. Hence we learn by way of Inſtruction: *An ignorant heart is a naughty heart, whether out of blindneſs they do*

do not, or out of prophaneſs they will not underſtand, and look into their eſtates. He that never ſaw his ſin aright, he never yet ſaw good day, nor the leaſt appearance of any ſaving work of Gods grace in his ſoul, yea he is ſo far from attaining ſuch a condition, that in truth he is not in the way to it. We wil go no further than the conſideration of the former truth, and then let thy Conſcience be judg in the caſe propounded. Suppoſe then thou ſhouldeſt hear a diſtreſſed creature under the terror of his Conſcience freely and ingeniouſly lay open his condition unto thee. The day is yet to dawn and the hour yet to come, that ever he was touched with any ſence of ſinful rebellions, never yet Godly ſorrow came into my ſoul, nor remorſe into my Conſcience for al my many miſcarriages before God and men, wounds of Conſcience, burdens of ſpirit, and brokenneſs of heart for our daily departures and provocations they are wonders and riddles. I have heard of ſuch diſpoſitions, but am a ſtranger to the having of the leaſt work that way. I appeal to thy own Conſcience, what wouldeſt thou think of ſuch a party, who thus confeſſeth, and is as he confeſſeth? me thinks I hear thee anſwering, and thy heart ſhaking before thou giveſt it, What! ſenceleſs of his ſin! how fearful is his eſtate! Where there is no ſence, there can be no ſorrow, no repentance, therefore no Chriſt, nor pardon, nor Salvation, for *unleſs ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Never broken, God will never bind, ſo far from being good that he is not yet in the way to receive any good. Wo unto him that hath thus ſinned, and thus continues. Oh poor ignorant Creature thine own mouth hath condemned thee, thou haſt paſt ſentence againſt thine own ſoul, thou never hadſt a true ſight of thy ſins, therefore thou couldeſt never have a true ſence of them, or ſorrow for them; thou never hadeſt a ſound apprehenſion, thou canſt not have a through contrition for them. It came not near thy heart to break it, when it never touched it in

Truth, nay, it never was within thy ken to see it in a right manner: See yet thy misery further in enlarged these several Degrees following:

There is no evil thou canst prevent, no good thou canst receive, no mercy thou canst expect: and when thou hast looked sadly upon these, thou wilt have thy load.

1. *Liable thou art to all the hazards that Devils can devise or intend, men endeavor, or thy self deserve.* A blind man is subject to all kind of injurious dealings from the feeblest persons, yea, from Children; plot they may, he cannot perceive; do they may, he cannot avoid. It is so with an ignorant person in his Spiritual condition, he is a prey to his sins, and a spoyl in the hands of Satan that catcheth him at his pleasure, and carrieth him headlong and hood-winked to everlasting destruction, every snare entraps him, allurement intangles him, temptation foils him; he can see nothing, prevent nothing, but goes like an Ox to the slaughter, and a Fool to the stocks, and knows nothing: Nay, were there no Devils to tempt thee, thou wouldest run into all evils of thine own accord. An ignorant heart like a blind man, stumbles at every block, fals into every ditch, yea, rusheth with greedines to the practice of the most hellish evils: It was the Jews case, out of ignorance they chose *Barabbas a Murderer*, and rejected *the Lord of Life*; they were violent to take away his blood, that came to take away their sins, and this out of ignorance; for so our Savior in his prayer, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*, Luke 23. 34. *He that walks in darkness, knows not whither he goes*, though he go to Hell; 1 *John*, 2. 11.

2. *There is no good he can receive from any means remaining in this blindness.* Counsels do not take place, Mercies cannot perswade, Judgments, Threatnings do no awaken, Admonitions, Exhortation are of no force, they are beyond the reach of all these, they cannot come at

at them, therefore cannot work upon them, But as in ſome deſperate diſeaſes when they are come to the greateſt extremity, as in a Quinſie, when it hath ſwelled beyond meaſure, that ſpeaking and ſwallowing are wholly hindred, each man that ſees will eaſily conceive, and conclude, Alas, he is but a dead man, he can take nothing, therefore it's not poſſible he can continue. The Diſeaſe indeed is curable, but how ſhould his Phyſick cure him, or his Diet nouriſh him, if he can take neither, there is no good to be expected, to be done, when he can take nothing that can do him good. So it is in the ſoul, ignorance ſtops the paſſage of the power and work of al Gods Ordinances: There is no corruption, but the means are mighty through God to relieve, if they could be taken; were the heart proud, if the Word were received and welcomed, it would humble it; if ſtubborn, it would meeken and calm it; if unclean, it would purge it. But ignorance ſtops al the paſſages, intercepts the work of the Word, the underſtanding conceives it not, and the heart cannot profit by it, nor be bettered therewith.

3. *There is no Mercy thou canſt expect*: And this is able to ſplit a mans heart and hopes in irrecoverable diſcouragements; for though our endeavors prevail not, means proſper not, yet mercy can outbid both, and relieve beyond both; but if mercy ſuffer thee to be blinded, mercy wil ſuffer thee to be damned. It's Gods own reſolution expreſſed *Iſai.* 27. 11. *They are a people that have no underſtanding, therefore he that made them, will not ſave them*, nay, he will ſhew *no mercy* to them. It's the determination, he hath ſetled as a concluſion beyond controul, *Hoſ.* 4. 14. *The people that do not underſtand, ſhall periſh*; It's the laſt execution he will put forth, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8. *He will come in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to them that know him not.* They are the mark in the firſt place, againſt which the fierceſt of his fury expreſſeth it ſelf. They that wil not now

now ſee their ſins by the word, they ſhall be forced to ſee them, and to look them over by the flames of Hell-fire at the day of Judgment.

Uſe, 2. Hence again it follows: *To be hard to be convicted is a dangerous ſin, and a dreadful curſe to the party that is tainted with ſuch a diſpoſition of ſpirit.* We wil go no further than the Doctrine delivered, and that will give in undeniable evidence to both parts of the collection:

I. 1 *To be hard to be convinced, is a dangerous ſin*; and that more waies than one.

1. *He ſins againſt his own ſoul*; the happineſs and peace of it as being acceſſary, and that in a ſpecial manner, to his own everlaſting ruine, and imbrewed his hands in his own blood as it were; when the helps that God hath appointed, provided, and now alſo preſents before him, and puts into his hands, he willingly, yea wilfully rejects, refuſeth the uſe of them, and oppoſeth the work of them, and ſo conſequently his ſpiritual good that might come thereby. When the Patient out of ſullenneſs, and waywardneſs of ſpirit, refuſeth the Phyſick or Diet provided for his good; at laſt Nature becomes ſo low, that he is utterly diſenabled to take it, and ſo is ſtarved and famiſhed, each man concludes, he was acceſſary to his own death. So when God hath ſent his faithful Servants to admoniſh thee, his Miniſters to convince that gainſaying Spirit of thine, to ranſack the corruption of thy cankered Conſcience, ſo that the core might have been ſearched, and thy diſtempers healed. Who knows what good might have been wrought, what benefit thou mighteſt have received, hadſt thou but ſuffered and received the helps provided for that end; which when thou diddeſt oppoſe, and not ſuffer thy ſelf to be convinced, thou didſt oppoſe thine own everlaſting welfare, and therefore art guilty of thine own blood, *Luke*, 7. 30. *The Publicans and ſinners juſtified God, and were baptized; but the Scribes and Phariſees rejected*

jected the Counſel of God againſt themſelves, i. e. againſt their own good and happineſs. Yea, ſo the Apoſtle to the gainſaying Corinthians, when he had diſputed long, and manifeſted the Truth in the cleer evidence of it, *Acts*, 18. 14. and they gainſayed ſtill, *and blaſphemed, he ſhook his rayment in ſign of diſtaſt and indignation, and ſaid, your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean*, he was innocent. And ſo one day thou wilt be forced to confeſs, and to cleer the innocency and faithfulneſs of Gods Servants, I was the cauſe of my confuſion, my own wayward gainſaying Spirit, elſe I might have been recovered; they did their duty with much painfulneſs, but my perverſe ſpirit would not receive that counſel, which would have directed and comforted me, but now condemns me. So *Paul* to the contradicting Jews, *Acts*, 13. 46. *Becauſe ye put away the Word, and judg your ſelf unworthy of eternal life*: thou wilt then be forced to yield it, I am unworthy that ever the Promiſes of the Goſpel ſhould eſtabliſh my heart who would not be convinced of the goodneſs of them, unworthy that ever the Goſpel ſhould be the ſavor of life to me, who have caſt it behind my back as unſavory Salt.

He ſins againſt the Ordinances, the Faithfulneſs, Truth, and free Grace of God therein revealed and diſpenſed for his everlaſting good; he caſts all theſe behind his back, and out of a ſlight neglect wil not give the leaſt entertainment thereunto. This quarrelling diſpoſition, like a ſqueazy ſtomach, ſpils the Phyſick when he cannot endure to take it, flings away the dainties provided when he is not willing, nor hath not a heart or appetite to feed on them; and how hainous this contempt is, the Apoſtle intimates, *Hebrews*, 2. 3. *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?* 2.

It ſins againſt Gods Spirit in a more than ordinary manner; he would ſeem in his gainſaying frame to try maſteries with the Lord, and in the higheſt ſtrain of rebellion 3.

bellion, to conteſt with the Almighty Spirit of Chriſt in the utmoſt defyance, as refuſing to yield in the leaſt appearance, I call it the higheſt ſtrain of rebellion to try Maſteries with the Almighty, and that may be thus obſerved.

When our Savior was to leave the world, and to go to Heaven to poſſeſs the glory he had with the Father before all worlds, he comforts the hearts of his Diſciples touching his departure with the Conſideration of the incomparable benefit that would accrew therefrom, *John*, 16. 7. *It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come, but if I depart I will ſend him*, that is, the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus would not diſpenſe the powerful work of his Grace in ſuch an abundant meaſure, unleſs he aſcended unto the Throne of his Grace; for the largeneſs of the diſpenſation thereof, and that in reaſon until that time, *The Spirit was not yet given, becauſe Chriſt was not yet glorified*, John, 7. 39. *When he aſcended up on high, he then gave gifts unto men even for the Rebellious*, Eph. 4. 8. And herein appears the powerful diſpenſation of his Grace, and operation of his Spirit, then when the Comforter is come, he ſhal convince the world of ſin, he ſhal ſet down the Conſciences of the Sons of men in the ſight of their vileneſs and guilt: This is as it were the Maſter-piece of the work of the Spirit, when he is ſent from Heaven, from the Father and the Son with full Commiſſion and Power, from our Savior, advanced to the higheſt pitch of ſupreameſt excellency of his Kingly, Prophetical, and Prieſtly Offices, and that for this end in the firſt place as the prime and hardeſt work to convince the world of ſin: Now to gainſay and contradict this Spirit in this Work, for which he hath received this Commiſſion, is to conteſt for Maſteries with the Almighty, *Heb.* 12. 25. *If they eſcaped not who refuſed* Moſes *who ſpake on Earth, how ſhall we eſcape if we refuſe him that ſpeaks from Heaven?* And this is the higheſt

higheſt ſtrayn of rebellion, when a man wil not give way nor yield in the leaſt but ſhut out this authority of the ſpirit from having any entertainment, even in the ſuburbs, in our apprehenſions and underſtandings, while we continue in this gainſaying frame; there wants nothing but light and malice to make it the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt. Here is the hainouſneſs of the ſin;

See the Curſe of it that is dreadful. II.

Thou makeſt way for Satan in the means which are appointed by God to oppoſe him John 13. 27. *The Devil entred into* Judas *with a ſopp*, ſo he enters with an admonition and counſel while thou doeſt oppoſe that truth which ſhould help thee againſt his power and ſubtilty, but yieldeſt thy ſelf fully to be poſſeſſed by both, Thou wilt not be guided by the counſel of God, therfore thou ſhalt be couſened by the deluſions of the Devil. 1.

Chriſt in his righteous dealings and according to thy juſt deſervings delivers thee up to the power of Satan, whenas thou waſt willing to yeild up thy ſelf to his poſſeſſion, *So Paul.* 1. *Tim.* 3. 20. *delivers* Hymeneus *and* Philetus *unto Satan*, and in Church diſcipline obſtinacy in the leaſt evil, is anſwerable to the greateſt offence, becauſe by that means the ſoul ſhakes off the authority of the Lord Jeſus, and ſo is to be caſt out. 2.

Becauſe thou haſt gainſayed his diſpenſations, *he wil have no more dealing with thee* Math. 23. laſt. *you ſhal ſee me no more.* He wil paſs by and not ſpeak with thee, He wil inſtruct others, admoniſh others, but he wil counſel thee no more, reprove thee no more. He wil not change a word with thee in the Aſſemblies, *My ſpirit ſhal not alwayes ſtrive*, *Gen.* 6. 3. That ſpirit which thou haſt reſiſted and oppoſed ſhal ſtir in thee and ſtrive with thee no more, thou wouldeſt not ſee, thou ſhalt not ſee therefore; thou wouldeſt not have thy conſcience ſtirred it ſhal be ſeared therefore. 3.

4. *Thou art ever* ... *reſerved in the chayns of dar-* ... *day.* and therefore thy conſci- ... vil himſelf, thou haſt only the liber- ... that is, liberty to encreaſe thy ſins and thy ... when the Lord would prepare a people for deſtruction he ſayes. *Iſa.* 6. 10. he ſeals them up under the curſe of a blind mind and a hard heart. *Hear ye indeed but underſtand not, and ſee yee indeed but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and ſhut their eyes leſt they ſee with their eyes and underſtand with their heart and convert and be healed.*

Uſe, 3. *Of Inſtruction, why men of the greateſt ability for depth of brain and ſtrength of underſtanding are moſt hardly brought to brokennes of heart and to be wounded with Godly ſorrow for their ſins*; the ground is from the point in hand, becauſe they are hardeſt brought to ſee their ſins; the power of carnal reaſon doth ſo mightily prevayl in them being now in their natural condition, the ſtrength of their abilities becomes wholly perverted to their own hurt, and the maintaining of their own diſtempers, their ſubtilty deceives themſelves & they abuſe the ſharpneſs of their wit to beat back the authority of the truth and to wind away from the evidence of argument that is preſented to their view. They ſhut out the light of the truth from coming into their hearts. and therefore its not poſſible it ſhould work upon them kindly or effectually prevail with them for God. Hence that peremptory determination of the Apoſtle *not many wiſe men after the fleſh* 1. Cor. 1. 26. becauſe *the wiſdom of the fleſh is enmity againſt God.* Rom. 8. 7. when it is as a weapon in the hand and under the command of our fleſhly hearts, It fortifies moſt ſtrongly againſt the evidence and efficacy of the truth, wil not ſuffer a conviction to faſten upon the Conſcience, and therefore no Godly ſorrow to affect the ſoul of a ſinner. As it is in war when the trenches and outworks are ſlight,

and

and the wal of the City low, and the Caſtle weak, its no matter of danger or difficulty for a wiſe Commander with compitent forces to ſurpriſe it, to carry the place, and Conquer the people their defence was but feeble, but were their out-works ſtrong, their walls high, the Citadel and Caſtle impregnable, it wil abide many aſſaults and ſtand out long, even againſt the greateſt power that ſhal beſiege them, and happily be forced to raiſe the ſiege and forſake the place as not able to prevail. It is ſo in our ſpiritual condition, when the Lord coms to lay ſiege to the ſoul of a ſinful creature who is now under the power of darkneſs, and the ſoveraign command of his corruptions which rule as ſupream Lords over him: There is no Converſion without Conviction (as hath been ſhew'd in opening the point) Its not poſſible the heart ſhould be content to leave ſin unleſs the underſtanding clearly ſee the loathſomneſs of it, the out-works and walls of the ſoul are our apprehenſions and underſtanding, now where there is wilineſs, depth and ſubtilty of wit, large reaches of carnal reaſon, theſe the Apoſtle calls *ſtrong holds.* 2. *Cor.* 10. 4. and they wil abide the battery and force of the moſt plain evidences, ſtrongeſt arguments that can be deviſed and alleadged with the beſt skil and yet hold it out againſt all. where the oppoſition is not ſo ſtrong the entrance is more eaſy, and ſubjection is ſooner yielded to the evidence of the truth. This is the ground the prophet gives of that invincible ſtiffneſs, pride, and contempt of Babilon, as being unteachable under al diſpenſations, *Thy wiſdom and thy knowledg they have perverted thee, or cauſed thee to rebell,* Iſa. 47. 10. It was the reaſon of that ſtubbornneſs of which the Lord complains in the Scribes and Phariſees the great Rabbies of the world. *Luke.* 7. 30. 31. *the Publicans and ſinners Glorified God becauſe of John Baptiſts doctrine,* and ſo yielded themſelves and were overcome of the evidence of the truth. *but the Scribes and Phariſees*

riſes rejected the counſel of ... it by and
would not ſuffer the counſel of ... or to
prevail with them. *Paul* never foun...
ment and greater oppoſition than at *Cori...*
thens, the Mart of ſciences and Store-houſe of ...
and learned men, the excellency of whoſe parts an...
the conceit of learning and wiſdom did ſo tranſport
them, and puffe up their earthly minds, that they
ſlighted the ſimplicity that was in Chriſt and trampled
upon the meaneſs of the Goſpel, *Acts.* 17. 18. *Phy-*
loſophers of the Epicure and Stoicks they encountred
Paul and ſaid what will this babler ſay? and v. 32.
ſome mocked; As though the reſt of the meaner ſort,
though they had no heart to receive the Goſpel yet they
had no skil to reſiſt, or were able, and therefore durſt
not grapple with his arguments. Theſe only who had
more learning, they gave the encounter, and openly
contemned both his purpoſe and doctrine, As it is with
men who are but weak and unskilful at the weapon,
not able to latch a blow or put by a thruſt, it's no hard
matter to get within them, but thoſe who are maſters
of defence are dextrous, and handy at their weapons,
there is little hope to hit them or to come within them.
So here, men of meaner capacities and of ſhallow reach,
they yield more eaſily and are forced to let fal their
weapons, but ſuch who are skilful are maſters of de-
fence, can deviſe devices, the ſubtilty of their own rea-
ſon is furthered by Satans ſuggeſtions, they wil latch
allmoſt any blow, and put by the plaineſt truth for
the preſent puſh, that there is no hope to come in to
them. And this alſo is the ground why your painted
Formaliſts, and ſubtil hypocrites who are grown cun-
ning in the craft of profeſſion, (for ſo they make it) they
are ſo hardly brought on to beleeve. Publicans and
...nners and Harlots ſhal goe before them. And for this
cau...e it is our Lord ſo marvailouſly diſtaſts this condi-
tion, ... *Rev.* 3. 17. *I would thou wert either cold or*
hot

hot, Lukewarmnes is worſe than prophanneſs, not that falſ ſhewes are worſe than groſſer evils when heart and life, outſide and inſide are both ill, but intruth becauſe ſuch are more difficult to be convinced of their evils, and therefore not likely to be amended or brought out of them q. d. As though the Lord had ſayed if thou wert openly naught, thou mighteſt be brought to ſee & acknowledg thy naughtineſs; Here *Paul* iſſues the ſtrength of that reſiſtance againſt the Lord and his Goſpel 1. *Coloſſ.* 21. *Enemies in your minds by wicked works.* but in the original, *Enemies by reaſon of your diſcourſes, ſet or attent to evil works.* It's the firſt ſtep to wiſdom *to become a fool*, and thats hard to him that is highly in love with his own wit.

Examination: we may hence gain certain evidence whether ever the Lord hath made any entrance upon this great work of preparation and ſo any expreſſion of his purpoſe effectually to call us to himſelf to this day or no. happily the Lord Chriſt hath been knocking oft at thy dore as he paſſeth by in the diſpenſation of his Ordinances in the wayes of his providence in which he hath walked towards thee, hath called in upon thy Conſcience, preſented the guilt of thy ſins and layd heavy things to thy charge, and knocked hard at thy dore, *awake thou that ſleepeſt*, ſo that thou haſt heard a confuſed noyſe as it were that made thee a little to look about, but hath the Lord ever lifted up the latch as though he were reſolved to come in? hath he layd hold upon and begun to grapple with that Graceleſs heart of thine, and held this light of diſcovery of ſin to thy mind as to conſtrayn thee to look wiſhly upon it indeed to ſee it clearly and convictingly according to that which hath formerly been ſpoken? Know and conclude thou maieſt, thou art in the right way, and the Lord begins to deal with thee as he doth with thoſe that he intends good unto. But art thou a ſtranger to theſe diſpenſations of the Lord and tradings with thy mind and

Uſe, 4.

and heart? Thou ma[illegible] and hear a rumor of Christ passing by, [illegible] of his Grace, but of any purpose of [illegible] thee, thou never couldst have the least [illegible] unto this day.

Quest. *How then shall we know whether we fall short of the true sight of sin or no?*

Answ. We will take both Particulars mentioned, into Consideration, that so we may take a true scantling of our own estate, and track the Footsteps and Impressions of the work of the Spirit upon our souls. I will touch the first in a word, and entreat more largely upon the Second, to wit, Touching the convicting sight of sin, because there lies the life and stress of this Doctrine.

I. If then we see sin cleerly, naked, and in it's own Nature, namely, this resistance and opposition against God as the greatest evil of al other: It wil thus be discerned, *This sight will keep the heart in cold blood from careless adventuring upon the commission of sin.* You must stil remember my purpose is not to dispute of sanctifying knowledg, or to give in evidence of that, for we are in this place to look at that light that is let in in this preparative work, and this first Branch of it, which how far it may go, or whether it can agree to an Hypocrite, I will not now dispute, that only I wil infer from it, is beyond exception; That in *cold blood*, i. e. Take such a man out of the hurry of a Temptation, when he is himself not drunk with some overbearing distemper, for then he knows not where he is, or what he doth, and therefore may adventure to do any thing, but when a sinner is come to himself, and the sight of his sin as before disputed, it wil suffer him *carelesly to adventure* upon the Commission of that which appears such in his own apprehension, even the greatest evil of all. The dreadfulness then of this duty apprehended, wil drive the soul to a stand, and stop the sinner in his proceeding, that he dare as well eat his flesh,

fleſh, and take a Lyon by the claw, and a Bear by the tooth, as to have his hand in that which is the heavieſt plague of all in his own Judgment. There is no man living, but as he hath ſomthing which he prizeth as the chief good, in which his ſoul takes content, ſo the loſs of that, or that which is contrary to that, he looks at as the moſt unſupportable evil that can betide him. That the Soldier ſhould take the lye or challenge, and have the contempt of cowardice put upon him, and ſit ſtil, and not ſeek to revenge the wrong as he conceives it, he cannot bear it. That the covetous yong man ſhould *ſel his poſſeſſions, and part with all to the poor*, it is ſuch an unſufferable loſs, he will rather part with Heaven, the very hearing of it makes his heart heavy, and *himſelf to go away ſorrowful*, Mat. 19. 22. Yea, that which Nature hath made dear to all, to ſee death before a man, and danger ſuch as wil undoubtedly hazard the loſs of life; how do we fear the thought of it fly the ſight, avoid the occaſion of it? didſt thou ſee thy ſins and the helliſh reſiſtance of thy heart againſt God to be a greater evil than al theſe? didſt thou really judg them ſuch, beleeve them (as the men of *Niniveh* did *Jonahs* threatning, *Jonah*, 3. 5.) to be ſuch? It's certain it would amaze thy heart, that thou wouldeſt be as loth to ruſh into evil, as thou wouldeſt be to run upon a Spears point, or caſt thy ſelf into the mouth of the Lyon to be torn in pieces. Take a rebellious ſinner beſet with the horror of his Conſcience, ſo that he ſees Hell gaping for him, and the Devils ready to ſeize upon that helliſh heart of his, how loaths he then the leaſt appearance of thoſe corruptions, the evil of which he ſees in the puniſhment only? how tender is he to avoid the occaſion of them? When the evil of thy puniſhment is now over and out of mind, didſt thou but know that reſiſtance and rebellion of thy heart againſt God, his Grace, his Spirit, his Truth aright, as greater than all thoſe evils, and is now preſent with thee, thou wouldſt be ſo far fearful not heedleſly to adventure upon

upon the practice of [illegible] for his *Covetouſneß had brought* [illegible] *pieces*, Matth. 27. 3. And it's [illegible] and Phariſees in the Synagogue, and in the Country of *Judea*, could not have [illegible] with him had they been then tendred to him; much more had he ſeen the reſiſtance had been a greater evil than the vengeance that did befal, *Acts*, 19. 16. 19. *When the evil ſpirits prevailed againſt the ſeven Sons of* Sceva, *fear fell on them all, and many of them had uſed curious Arts, brought their books together, and burnt them before them all.* When the hearts of theſe Converts were pricked, and they craved Counſel what they ſhould do, *Peter* amidſt many other Counſels which he ſuggeſted, ads this, verſe 40. *Save your ſelves from this crooked generation*; You that are in *Parthia, Meſopotamia, Phrigia, Galatia*, you are amongſt many profeſſed Enemies to the Lord Chriſt & his Truth, therefore ſave your ſelves from their Society, and verſe 44. *They came and abode together, and ſold their goods and parted them as every one had need.*

Hearken to this you diſobedient Children and rebellious Servants, who have the Commands of Parents and Maſters, Counſels of Servants and Neighbors dayly ſuggeſted and preſſed upon you; liſten to this you heedleſs Profeſſors, who have the Word and Precepts of God dayly publiſhed in your Ears, and proclaimed in your hearing, and you go away informed, convinced, and the heart cannot gainſay but it ought to ſtoop, your carriages ſhould not be wayward, your words ſharpiſh, your behaviors uncomely: and yet you dare, you do heedleſly, careleſly adventure at the next time and turn upon the ſame ſins; you may talk what others ſay by rote, and profeſs in words that ſin is the greateſt evil of al, but in truth you never ſaw ſin to this day, much leſs ſaw it to be the greateſt evil of al. A little evil, were it but the loſs of ſo much of thy blood by ſtripes, or the loſs

loss of so much money, wert thou punished in thy purse for such wretchlessness, they would cause thee to set thy mind, and heart, and hand to thy work, the loss of thy life, and soul, and Heaven, and God, and al would prevail more with thee; but in truth thou never yet knewest what the loss of these meant, and therefore not what thy sin is that brings the loss of all.

Thus much for the sight of sin cleerly; come we now to enquire of the second, AND HERE MAKE WE PRVIY SEARCH WHO THEY BE THAT SEE SIN CONVICTINGLY, by the Evidence of *the former Doctrine, and that will be an Inditement against four sorts of Persons, whose Practices give in undeniable proof, that they fal short of this Dispensation of God aright, they never found this Work upon their minds.* I.

The first are such, *Who are unwilling to come within the Rule and discovery of the Truth, that will lay open a mans loathsom corruptions, which are yet beloved, and lodg too neer the heart.* If he might have his wil, he would not meet with that Truth that would meet with his Courses, whereby he gives his sensual Spirit exceeding great content; unwilling to hear that to be an evil, which he is unwilling to reform; loth that such and such either dispositions or carriages should be condemned as wicked, which he is loth to part withal; he loves not to have this or that to be a Rule, or a Duty, and yet he fears it wil prove so, and therefore desires not to hear of it, left he should be forced to practice it; and therefore he is most at ease when he is least within the sight, and cal, and command of such Truths which he knows do so narrowly and deeply concern him: and therefore he deals in this case with the Dispensations of the Word, as men use to do that are in debt and danger of Law and Creditors; they fly the Country when they know the under Sheriff hath any Writ out against them, or else betake themselves to some Priviledg places, where 1.

they may be freed from the Arrest of the Officer. So these labor to be there where the Truth in reason is not likely to exercise any jurisdiction, they willingly desire to be without the reach of it, and therefore willing to live in such places under such Ministries where their Consciences may not be troubled, their hearts and waies searched, and they brought to yield subjection by an overpowering hand. And here sometimes it comes to this, and that by the confession of their own mouths, when God hath broke in upon their hearts, that they have been afraid to be in the company of such men that they suspected would either convince and cal to such practices, or yet to come to the Congregations while such Truths were in scanning and consideration: Or as a Formal Knight once professed (in the Country from whence we came) he would not come to the Assembly until the Minister had made an end of such a Text. Thus *Ahabs* Spirit was carried towards *Micaiah*, when al his Trencher Chaplains, the false Prophets, had dressed a Dish on purpose to fit his tooth and turn, had brought in a Verdict that they knew would please his humor, and content his carnal desire; *Jehosaphat* in simplicity of heart, that he might indeed in sincerity seek after the mind and counsel of God, enquires, *Is there here any Prophet of the Lord that we might enquire of him?* He answered, *There is none but one* Micaiah, *and I hate him, for he never propheseth good, but evil to me*, 1 Kings, 22. 8. He did not suit his humor, nor please his pallat, therefore he was not willing to hear that from him, that happily he should be unwilling to do. So they in *Isaiahs* time, they would give the Prophet his Text, and tel him what Points he should handle also; *They said to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, propheſie not right things; propheſie smooth things:* Isai. 30. 10. And so dealt those false-hearted Hearers with our Savior, when he pressed Spiritual and searching Truths upon them, *they were not able to di-*

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gest them; this is a hard saying, who can hear it, and from that time saies the Text many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him, John, 6. 66. and hence it is persons of this temper are most pleased when their sins or duties are discovered in some general discourses, because they then suppose they may creep away in the croud, and their particular either conditions or corruptions will not be attached, and they and them brought to the tryal; but when it comes to meet with him in the narrow, and touch him in his particular, these persons begin to storm, *Acts*, 7. 51, 52. they heard *Stephen* quietly rip up the rebellious carriages of the Jews; but when he came home to their doors, and held the Candle to their Eyes, and gave in special Evidence to convince them also, they were not able to endure it: *Ye stiff-necked and hard-hearted as your Fathers, so do ye; they were Slayers of the Prophets, and you the betrayers and murderers of the just one; when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and gnashed upon him with their Teeth, &c.*

2. If yet the Truth will come in upon them, and the light wil shine in their faces that it cannot be avoided, if they cannot prevent the seeing of it, *then they fall to gainsaying*, they strive mightily to stop the passage of the Truth, and to darken the evidence of it, to take off the edg and force of that which they conceive wil fal most heavily upon them, and constrain them to alter their course, and lay down those distempers they are very loth to leave, *Acts*, 18. 6. *They opposed themselves.* They deal with the Truth as subtil Lawyers do with a good Cause, when the strength of it is such that they are not able to withstand, they labor to hide the Point of the Argument, and to hide that wherein the stress of the Cause lies, and fal hotly upon some bye business, or else deal most in those things which are most probable, but indeed do not touch the Point. So a Spirit that is not willing to be convinced, he wil endea-

vor to decline the strength of an Argument, and look least to that where the stress and the weight of the Rule or Duty lies that most concerns him, or his course, when he sees the stream and force of Reason coming in upon him, he wil hinder or interrupt the delivery of it, and turn it another way, or raise some blinds, and cast in some cavils, like the putting out of the light, or if not hinder the observation, yet take off the attendance and consideration of it, he wil get off from that as soon as may be, he will not stay there where the strength of the conviction lies, but foist in many Objections, start other Considerations, that so he may lose the Argument, and himself lose the power of the Truth that might prevail with him. *Thus* Elimas *the Sorcerer*, Acts, 13. 10. when *Paul* and *Barnabas* had preached, and *he labored to turn away the Deputy from the Faith. Paul* thus speaks to him, *O full of all subtilty* (he had a slight of hand to any wickedness) *why dost thou crook the strait waies of the Lord.* He cast in many cavils, put in many suspicions and pretences that he might not look at the simplicity of the Truth delivered. The word there used in the Original, implies a sleight of hand as we cal it, when such wily spirits can turn themselves into al shapes, to turn by the evidence of the Truth; so many windings and turnings, so many wimblings of devices, so many outs and doubtings, that may bemist the manifest discovery of a Duty which ought to be done, or a sin that ought to be avoided, and so in conclusion loseth the Truth, and the benefit of it also, through Gods just Judgment, and their own just deservings. So the Scribes dealt touching our Savior when he had cured the Eyes of the blind man, *John*, 9. they would have taken him off from the attendance to the work to have slighted the person of our Savior, *We know* (say they) *this man is a sinner, &c.* as it's said of a Fish called the *Sepia*, when the Fisher-man comes to follow her, she casts forth a kind of black humor with

with which ſhe darkeneth the water; and puts him to a loſs in his proceedings; whereas an honeſt heart that is willing to be convinced, he looks moſt at that where there is moſt light, and moſt ſtrength, and is deſirous to attend that which gives in greateſt Evidence to overcome the heart. So *Ely* ſpake to *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 17. *hide nothing from me.* Job. 6. 24. *teach me and I wil hold my tongue* he wil quierly hear al, and attend that moſt, which may carry the cauſe to his Conſcience.

If yet the evidence of the truth be ſuch that he cannot gainſay, his mouth is ſtopped and his reaſons are ſpent he hath nothing to oppoſe, *there is a third diſtemper* which is as bad if not worſe than the two former, *A reſtleſneß of ſpirit to raiſe new brabbles and quarrels againſt the determination of the truth, which formerly he could not reſiſt.* When he is caught and held in the ſtrength of Argument, is taken captive and priſoner, he would fain reſcue himſelf with a reſtleſs jangling; he ſees more, and can ſay more though no man elſe can ſee it, nor he make good what he pretends. He cannot anſwer yet wil not yield, cannot maintain his conceits yet wil not forſake them. As Lawyers they'l bring the cauſe about again, and have a freſh hearing in this and that Court; the reaſons are the ſame, and were anſwered before yet he brings them over again and juſt in the place where he was, his arguments are at an end. if his ſpirit were ſo, but there is more in it (he ſaies) and he cannot ſee through it, and yet cannot tell how to prove his own argument or anſwer anothers, theſe ſpirits are like quickſilver which yet no man hath attained any skil to fix, ſo the Rulers, Elders, and Scribes when they knew not how to daſh the Glory of the Goſpel, and the powerful diſpenſation thereof mark how reſtleſly the venome of their ſpirits tranſported them againſt reaſon, *Acts.* 4. 15. 16. 17. *they communed amongſt themſelves ſaying what ſhal we do to theſe men,* 3.

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for that indeed a notable Miracle hath been done by them is manifeſt to all men, and we cannot deny it, but let us ſtraightly charge them that they ſpeak no more in this name, when in reaſon they ſhould have inferred we cannot deny the Miracle and ſo not the truth, let us not deny the liberty to ſpeak, ſo they in *John* 9. 24. when it was apparent Chriſt had cured the man, wrought the Miracle, and ſo gained honour in the heart of the man, therefore they had fiſhed up and down to weaken that, and it would not do; It appeared he was blind, (to his parents) that Chriſt had cured him, ſo himſelf affirmed; then they come to this, give *God the praiſe we know this man is a ſinner*. But what is that to the purpoſe *or how know they that?* he anſwered *whether he be a ſinner or no I know not, one thing I know whereas I was blind he hath opened my eyes*; and this was to the purpoſe, *Then ſaid they what did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes, I have told you already &c.* they are upon the ſame hinges not ſtirred a haires breadth Here are no reaſons but only wreſtlings of ſtomack, we are *Moſes* Diſciples but this fellow we know not whence he is.

4. If it be ſo that al theſe deviſes againſt the truth ſerve not his turn *in the fourth place he ſets himſelf againſt the truth* he cares not for argument, but he wil ſtand againſt the truth, and then God in his juſt judgment leaves him, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 18. *he gave them up to ſtrong deluſions that they might believe lyes that they might be damned, becauſe they received not, but oppoſed the truth* thus it was with *Balaam Numb.* 24. 1. he went out not as formerly but reſolved to Curſe *Iſrael* whether God would or no, *and this is to hold down the truth in unrighteouſneſs*, *Rom.* 1. 18. I told you before that in Conviction, when the heart is throughly Convicted, it lies ſtil under the work of God, but here the heart oppoſes the word of God. *Exo.* 10. 28. ſaies *Pharaoh* to *Moſes* get thee out of my ſight, the day thou

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ſeeſt my face thou ſhalt die, *Moſes* ſaies, *I wil ſee thy face no more*, but God ſends to him and kills his firſt born and afterwards drownes himſelf; It's certain that if the truth followes a man home to his beloved ſin, if he be a dog he wil ſnarl againſt it, and reſolve to keep his ſin. *Jer.* 44. 16. 17. as the proud men there ſaid, *as for the word of the Lord thou haſt ſpoken to us, we wil not hearken unto thee*; and if a man goes thus far he is very neer to the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and if ever God bring him home to himſelf it is by ſome ſtrange judgments.



Exhortation to provoke the deſires and quicken the endeavors of al that have heard or read the doctrin delivered & opened to lay out their labour & that unto the utmoſt of all their abilities never to give the Lord reſt, nor reſt unto their own ſouls, before they get this true ſight of ſin, if ever they hope to ſee the work of Gods Grace in their hearts here in this world, or to ſee the face of God in Glory, in that other world that is to come. Bretheren let not Satan deceive you, nor ſuffer your ſelves ſo far to be deluded as to dream of another courſe or to deviſe a ſhorter cut to Grace and Glory, for its certain if you do, you wil fal ſhort of your hopes and Comforts and all. This is the way that God hath appointed and he wil bleſs, the order which he hath ſet in his infinite wiſdom and which he wil proſper. If you would find his bleſſing walk in his way, if you expect ſucceſs attend his order and direction which he hath left to bring us to his Chriſt, and ſo to life and happineſs. If you ſee not your ſins you are in hazard never to ſee good day while you live nor when you dye. Chriſt is ſaid *to ſtand at the dore and knock, and if any man* wil open unto him, he wil come in and ſupp with him, *Rev.* 3. 20. Saving Contrition is a ſhooting back the boults of our baſe luſts, a ſevering and unlocking the heart from the Soveraignty of ones noyſom Corruptions, that ſtop the paſſage and hinder the com-

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ing of our Saviour; this clear and convicting sight of our sins, is as it were the lifting up of the latch, or letting in of the Key, the powerful dispensation of the truth and operation of his spirit whereby the knot and combination between sin and the soul is broken and severed, and the way made that the authority of the truth may come at the heart and work kindly upon it for good. An error here in the entrance is hardly ever recovered to miss here is mervailous dangerous, it spoyles our whol proceeding in the great work of our calling and everlasting comfort as the naturallist and Physitian observe an error in the first concoction is never recovered in the second, for the Lord in his wisdom and the course of nature hath so ordayned, that each part doth that which is its proper and peculiar work but doth not rectify or redress that which was done amiss by another, and so the goodness of the nourishment is never recovered or the body strengthened or health so comfortably preserved herby as were to be desired. So it is in the entrance of this great work of preparation for Christ and our effectual bringing home unto him, never see sin aright, the soul cannot be affected with it in a right manner, never truly see the need of a Savior, never seek after him or come to him; this through sight of sin is as it were the setting open of the window whereby the light and good of the truth, and the loathsomness of sin is laid open unto the soul, and comes in a main upon the Conscience to prevayl with it whereas shut this window and stop this passage, the soul is cooped up in the dungeon of darkness and delusion, be the ordinances never so powerful the means never so effectual there is no coming into the heart, no hope to work upon it or to prevail with it for good; the evil of sin is not acknowledged, and therefore not prevented, that which his reason cannot see, a man cannot shun, the excellency and necessity of a Christ is not discerned and therefore not endeavoured after as were meet. It befalls

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the ſoul, ſmote with this ſpiritual blindneſs as with the Aſſyrian Hoſt when they came to ſurprize *Eliſha*, 2 Kings 18.19.20. *He prayed, Lord ſmite this people with blindneſs, & he did ſo and they ſaw nothing before they were in the midſt of their enemyes* ſo here, when the ſinner is miſguided by the dim of his deluded mind he goes on in an evil way, and knowes not whither he goes, or where he is, before he be in the bottomleſs pit. Oh be wiſe and wary therefore that we err not here, leaſt we ruſh into ruine and that paſt al recovery. Expect then Gods bleſſing upon our endeavour but in Gods order, & attend his work in his own way. It is the aym of our Saviour in ſending and the office of the Holy Ghoſt in coming into the world when he intends to work effectually the ſaving good of his people, to intitle them to the pardon of their ſins, and to eſtabliſh their hearts under the government of his ſpirit. *John.* 16. 7. 8. *If I depart I wil ſend the Comforter, and when he is come he wil reprove*, he wil convince, and ſet down the world by undeniable conviction *of ſin of righteouſneß, of judgment, of righteouſneß*, that the law is ſatiſfied, juſtice anſwered, and that fully, becauſe he that was in priſon is now releaſed, and therefore the debt payd, *and he gone* to heaven, *to his Father.* Of *judgment* the power of his Kingdom & government erected and ſet up in the ſoules of his ſervants and children, *in that by death he overcame him that had the power of death that is the Devill*, and therefore he is judged and falls in his cauſe as having no right nor in reaſon can challenge no rule in the hearts of thoſe, for whom Chriſt hath ſatiſfied divine juſtice, and therefore are free from that authority that ſin and Satan had of them thereby. But before we can ſhare either in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for our juſtification or the rule of his ſpirit in our Sanctification, the Holy Ghoſt muſt and doth *convince us of ſin*, that we have rejected and not entertained this Saviour. If we do not convictingly

ly see our sin in settling upon the root of our Corrupt rebellions and casting away the riches of Christs mercy & the rule of his Grace, its not possible that those spiritual benefits should ever be made ours. As ever therefore you desire to see and find the mercies of Christ sealed up unto your Consciences, in pardoning of sins and acceptation of your persons; As ever you would find the Kingdom of Satan cast down in your hearts, and the government of his Grace and spirit there set up; labor for this clear and convicting light of sin, begin you where the Holy spirit begins that you may find his presence with you,& his effectual power and blessing to accompany your endeavours in that way. Catch not disorderly at pardon, look not for peace of Conscience or hope to see the government of Christs Grace set up in your souls before you come to see your sins by convicting evidence of the Holy Ghost. The holy spirit of Grace wil not cross his course to gratify our Corruption. That I may further set on the exhortation, I shal endeavour to do these two things.

First, *To propound some means to help in this work.*

Secondly, *Some motives to quicken you therein.*

The means are these that follow.

Means 1. First, *Labor we to see that unconceivable excellency of holiness that is in the Lord, and search we into the scriptures and the righteous laws there recorded for the direction of our daily course*, and that wil make us see the loathsomness of our own hearts and the vileness of our sins. As its said of darkness, it cannot be seen by it self but its light that discovers it self and darkness; Its as true of sin, it is not by it self to be discerned, for it is spiritual darkness; the light of Gods Holiness and wisdom which by sin are wronged, and the law which is transgressed these are both lights, *God is light and in him is no darkness*,, John. 1. 5. *The law is a light and the Commandement a lamp unto our feet*, Prov. 6. 23.

6. 23. And by the ſight of both theſe we come to have a ful diſcerning of ſin which is oppoſite to them both.

Our ignorance of God breeds the ignorance of our own hearts, and the hidden waies of wickedneſs, and the cunning conveyances of corrupt diſtempers which are there in *Pſal.* 14. 1. 2. *The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God*, and then it followes they are become abominable he makes bones of no ſins at al ; for herein lies the ſpiritualneſs or ſpiritual evil of ſins and that hidden poyſon and malignity of the corruption of our natures, that they juſtle profeſſedly againſt the Almighty ſo far as he is pleaſed to communicate himſelf unto us in the waies of his Holineſs and goodneſs. Thus the blaſphemer is ſaid *to pierce God by his oaths*, *Levit.* 24. 11. and the wicked are ſaid to walk contrary to him, *Levit.* 26. *to reſiſt him, to weary him, to load him*, while then we ſee not him whom we do oppoſe by our ſins, no wonder that we neither ſee nor are ſenſible of the ſins, by which we do oppoſe him. Whereas could we grope after the Almighty as the Apoſtle profeſſeth we may, becauſe *he is not far from any of us*, nay *in him we live and move in every* ſpiritual action of our minds and hearts. So that did but a wicked man, or could he perceive that in every thought of his mind, motion of his wil, ſtirring of any affection, that he did juſtle with the infinite Holineſs and purity of the Lord, who meets with him in every action and motion of his mind and wil, It were able to ſink the ſoul of a ſinful creature, and make him ſit down confounded in the ſight of the loathſomneſs of his own wretched nature, as being wholly oppoſite to ſo infinite a good in all he is or doth ; thus it was with *Job* when the Lord had ſchooled him out of the whirlwind, & diſcovered the ſurpaſſing excellency of his Glory to him, he puts him beyond al pleas of his own worth, *Job.* 40. 4. *Behold I am vile* yea more expreſly he gives this as the reaſon of the diſcovery of his own wretchedneſs, I